

THE OPERATIC BASSOON: A PEDAGOGICAL EXCERPT COLLECTION

by

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*To my late parents, Mimi and Herman,
who took me to every music lesson, youth orchestra rehearsal, and attended every possible concert.
While no longer here, it is your voices and belief in me that continue to see me through.
I am the woman I am today because of you.
Love and miss you.
Always.*

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

I remember the very first opera performance I ever attended: it was my junior year of high school, and my AP European History class took a field trip to see the Lyric Opera of Chicago's performance of Giacomo Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. I was utterly mesmerized. The emotion. The connection. The music. The grandeur. A few years later, I found myself beginning my undergraduate studies at one of the most premier institutions for opera, Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. It was here that my fondness and interest for opera continued to grow. I was extremely fortunate to perform in an opera pit for the very first time, and actually found myself performing in a pit orchestra every semester of my undergraduate years.

As I matured as a musician and bassoonist, a natural step was to take auditions for available bassoon vacancies. I realized rather early on, as I began preparing for opera orchestra auditions, that I was unfamiliar with and unaware of many excerpts asked for on opera orchestra audition repertoire lists. The majority of the excerpts on said lists were ones that I was never exposed to or ones that I did not have the time to investigate myself during my collegiate years. It was this gap in my literature awareness which presented an opportunity for exploration into bassoon opera excerpts as a final project topic.

The more that I began brainstorming about this topic and what shape the final project would take, I decided that I wanted to create something that other bassoonists might find helpful or valuable in their own studies and discovery. I happened to stumble across Michael Parloff's *Opera Excerpts for Flute* and felt a little jealous that the bassoon world did not possess a similar resource. Mr. Parloff's collection of flute opera excerpts is a comprehensive resource which includes part/score, performance tips, background information, and piano accompaniment. In my design of this final project, I envisioned a pedagogical excerpt collection which strives to provide a meeting point for conversation of bassoon study and performance infused with preliminary musicology and music theory concepts for the bassoonist-scholar. It is my hope that this final project serves as the beginning of a new excerpt collection, one devoted to a comprehensive review of opera excerpts for the bassoon.

Chapter 2: REVIEW OF EXISTING EXCERPT COLLECTIONS

Orchestral excerpts are significant pedagogical study material for higher education and conservatory performance study curriculums. Excerpt collections are valuable resources that provide access to orchestral and operatic passages extracted from complete parts. These excerpts provide materials that help both students and seasoned professionals become more familiar with orchestral and operatic repertoire. Often these passages serve as vehicles to discuss, train, and improve on specific musical skills. Excerpts “have value as technical and musical training material and can familiarize students with orchestral literature.”¹ Studying excerpts occurs at all levels of music making, regardless of aspirations into a variety of positions.²

Of the many widely accepted and utilized bassoon orchestral excerpts collections, one completely devoted to a comprehensive overview of solely operatic bassoon excerpts does not exist. The purpose of this chapter is to review existing excerpt collections and their operatic holdings including composers and works, and the frequency of operatic titles through all collections.

There are 44 existing orchestral excerpt collections (Appendix 1), with publication range of ca.1900 to 2019 including four collections without a printed publication date, specifically for the bassoon and/or contrabassoon.³ Of which, 21 collections are devoted to a specific composer or set of composers. Additionally, of the 44 existing collections, 17 do not contain any passages from operatic works leaving the remaining 27 collections that do contain passages from operatic works.

¹ David Oyen, “An Examination of Published Orchestral Excerpt Study Materials for Bassoon and Contrabassoon” (DMA diss., The Ohio State University, 1998), 1.

² Tama Kott, *An Index of Excerpts and an Overview of Published Orchestral Bassoon Excerpt Collections with a Comparison of Three Collections* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 2004), 1.

³ I recognize that there could be newly published collections around the time of my research began/concluded that were unable to be included in this review.

Of the 27 collections which do contain passages from operatic works, an analysis can be made to show the percentage of operatic titles included in the collections:

- 4 collections contain 75% or more operatic titles
- 2 collections contain 74-50% operatic titles
- 7 collections contain 49-25% operatic titles
- 30 collections contain 24% or less operatic titles

The four collections which contain 75% percent or more operatic titles have a specific focus of composer or genre, not allowing for diversity and variety of composers and compositional time period.⁴ Fernando Righini's collection, *Il Fagotto in Orchestra*, holds the greatest number of compositional titles totaling 205 different works, of which 80 titles are from operatic repertoire for a total 39.02% of the collection devoted to operatic repertoire.⁵ The collections with the second and third most number of composition titles are respectively the five volume collection from Nekliudov with 158 titles of which 15 are operatic (9.49%), and Ciro Stadio's collection with 110 titles of which 52 are operatic (47.27%).

When compiled together, the 27 excerpt collections with operatic works contain a total of 158 different operatic titles from 63 different composers. Appendix 2 shows a listing of all operatic titles included within these collections and the frequency which they appear across the collections.⁶ The most frequently included opera title is Ludwig van Beethoven's *Leonora Overture No. 3, Op. 72* appearing in 12 collections. The next most frequently seen titles are Beethoven's *Fidelio, Op. 72* and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* with 10 appearances each.

Richard Wagner appears most frequently with 16 operas appearing in the collections. Giuseppe Verdi and Gioacchino Rossini each of which have the second-greatest number of operatic titles represented with a total of 10. Richard Strauss has the third-greatest number of operatic titles represented with a total of 9. Finally, W.A. Mozart and Giacomo Puccini come next with 8 operatic titles each.

⁴ The four collections are: Albert, Raimund Mages, Piesk (Mozart Opern), and Siebach Handel-Studien.

⁵ In researching the genres of works included in Righini, two works were unable to be discerned as opera or non-opera, both by V. Bucci: *Il Contrabasso Grot* and *Mirandolina Suite*. The total works for Righini (205) include Bucci's works.

⁶ As a point of clarification, frequency is based on the title of operatic work not a specific excerpt or passage.

Bizet's *Carmen*, Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Wagner's *Tannhäuser* are four operatic titles which commonly appear on orchestral audition repertoire lists and are included in higher education studies. *Le nozze di Figaro* appears within 9 collections, *Tannhäuser* appears in 6 collections, *L'elisir d'amore* appears in 5 collections, and *Carmen* appears in 4 collections.

For students and young professionals researching and learning about operatic excerpts, purchasing the 27 collections that contain operatic titles could very well be cost prohibitive and not a realistic investment in a quest to survey bassoon opera excerpts. The purpose of this overview is not to devalue the resources that presently exist, but to highlight that there is room for more resources.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

Where Did the Research Start?

As I began my venture into wanting to create a new excerpt collection focused on opera excerpts, I used three questions as a starting point for my research:

1. What excerpt collections exist?
2. Which opera excerpts are included in said collections?
3. Is there a standard or common list of opera excerpts use for bassoon auditions for opera orchestra positions?

It was my hope and hypothesis that the answers to these questions would allow me to demonstrate space within the existing collections for a new resource, and to provide a starting point of creating that new resource.

Finding & Analyzing Existing Excerpt Collections

In trying to identify existing bassoon excerpt collections, I first turned to Tama Kott's index, *An Index of Excerpts and an Overview of Published Orchestral Bassoon Excerpt Collections with a Comparison of Three Collection*. Also, I consulted David Oyen's dissertation, "An Examination of Published Orchestral Excerpt Study Materials for Bassoon and Contrabassoon." These two sources served as the primary resources in identifying existing excerpt collections. There are 39 excerpt collections identified between Kott's (2004) and Oyen's (1998) research. Recognizing the possibility that more bassoon excerpt collections have been created since the respective publication dates, I found myself looking for additional available excerpt collections. I did this by searching on sheet music purveyor and distributor websites, such as TrevCo Varner Music, etc., and library catalogues such as WorldCat and

IUCAT. In my research, I located 5 additional collections to expand upon Kott's and Oyen's research.¹

This research allowed me to assemble the list of 44 excerpt collections, as seen in Appendix 1.

In order to answer the second research question, "Which opera excerpts are included in said collections," I needed to see each collection's table of contents, or create one if none existed, and identify the operatic titles. For the excerpt collections included in Kott's index, each collection's repertoire is listed which allowed me to reduce her data to a list of only operatic titles per collection. For the 5 collections I found, I created a list of contents and identified the operatic titles for each. I was able to obtain content information of these five collections either by borrowing via interlibrary loan and/or viewing a table of contents on purveyor/publisher's website. As mentioned in the prior chapter, between the 44 excerpt collections, there is a total of 158 different operatic titles by 63 different composers, as seen in Appendix 2.

In addition to being lists of collections and list of operatic titles, Appendices 1 and 2 also provide some data and statistics for each excerpt collection and the included titles. Appendix 1 includes publication year, the number of operatic titles, and number of total works titles, and the percentage makeup of the collection that is operatic. Appendix 2 includes the list of operatic titles and the frequency at which they appear across the 44 collections.

Is There a Standard or Common List of Opera Excerpts for Bassoon Auditions for Opera Orchestra Positions?

As I mentioned in the introduction, my personal unfamiliarity and inexperience with opera excerpts left a gap in my knowledge and had me asking the question, "is there a common or standard list of opera excerpts for the bassoon?" In order to answer this question, I decided to go directly to the primary source for opera excerpt lists: prior audition vacancy lists of opera companies and opera

¹ These 5 collections are those by Hans Rudolph Seith, Raimondo Iconis, Rainer Schottstadt, Van Gansbeke, and Seltmann/Angerhöfer.

orchestras. In my search of obtaining prior opera bassoon audition lists, I contacted opera companies and opera orchestras directly, as well as called upon personal repositories from my own and other bassoonists' participation in opera auditions.

I contacted 23 opera organizations from five different countries including Australia, Canada, England, France, and the United States. From the 23 companies contacted, I received 13 responses, 7 of which were willing or able to share past audition lists and/or auditions packets.

Table 3.1: List of Opera Organizations and Orchestras Contacted

Organization	Response
Atlanta Opera	No Response
Boston Lyric Opera	No Response
Chicago Opera Theater	No Response
Dallas Opera	None to Share
Des Moines Metro Opera	No Response
Houston Grand Opera	No Response
Los Angeles Opera	Shared
Lyric Opera of Chicago	None to Share
Michigan Opera Theater	No Response
New York City Opera	No Response
Opera Australia	Shared
Opera de Montreal	None to Share
Opera Philadelphia	Shared
Opéra national de Paris	No Response
Royal Opera House	No Response
Santa Fe Opera	Shared
Sarasota Opera	None to Share
Seattle Opera	None to Share
Sydney Opera House	None to Share
The Metropolitan Opera	Shared
Washington National Opera	Shared
Wichita Grand Opera	No Response
Vancouver Opera	Shared

These opera organizations were selected at random following these guidelines: international presence, premier opera houses, and medium/regional organizations. From the seven opera orchestras that were willing or able to share past audition lists, and those acquired from personal repositories, I compiled a collection of 21 audition lists:

Table 3.2: List of Obtained Bassoon Audition Lists/Packets

Organization	Position	Year
The Metropolitan Opera	Principal Bassoon	1997
Vancouver Opera	Section Bassoon	2006
Opera Australia	Associate Principal Bassoon	2007
The Metropolitan Opera	Second Bassoon / Contrabassoon	2009
Los Angeles Opera	Principal Bassoon	2011
Washington National Opera / Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra	Bassoon / Contrabassoon	2011
Houston Grand Opera	Principal Bassoon	2012
The Metropolitan Opera	Principal Bassoon	2012
San Francisco Opera	Second Bassoon	2012
San Francisco Opera	Third Bassoon / Contrabassoon	2014
Washington National Opera / Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra	Principal Bassoon	2015
Ash Lawn Opera Festival	Principal Bassoon	2017
Michigan Opera Theater	Principal Bassoon	2017
The Santa Fe Opera	Principal Bassoon	2016
Opera Philadelphia	Section Bassoon II	2017
The Metropolitan Opera	Principal Bassoon	2018
The Atlanta Opera	Principal Bassoon	2018
Lyric Opera of Chicago	Principal Bassoon	2018
Boston Lyric Opera	Substitute Bassoon	n.d.
Opera Australia	Freelance - Bassoon	n.d.
Göteborg Opera	Fagott	n.d.

There came a point in my efforts to collect audition repertoire lists when I noticed a trend of which excerpts were regularly seen and asked for on audition lists. As I would obtain a new list, the majority of the repertoire listed would be the same as those lists already obtained. It was at this point, I felt comfortable with the collected 21 audition lists and believe I had arrived at what can be viewed and/or

called the common or standard list of opera excerpts for bassoon. This list is composed of 33 different operatic titles from 14 different composers, as seen in Appendix 3.

Deciding Which Excerpts to Focus On

From my initial research, review, and analysis of excerpt collections and audition lists, I noticed that the frequency of a certain bassoon excerpt within the 44 collections did not necessarily match the frequency seen on the 21 audition lists. For example, Beethoven's *Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72* and *Fidelio, Op. 72* are the two most frequently included opera excerpts within the collections, but do not appear on any of the audition lists obtained. This realization provided the next question: Which excerpts should be focused on for this final document which strives to be the beginnings of a new excerpt collection? To answer this question, I decided to make my selections from the operatic titles which appears within the obtained 21 audition lists. A driving factor in this decision was that the titles appearing on audition lists might be the first ones which bassoonists will be confronted with needing/wanting to learn in order to take an audition.

For the scope of this final project, ten excerpts were selected for further discussion. Deciding factors as to which ten excerpts were included were: frequency and common usage in compiled audition lists (see Appendix 3), lesser-known excerpts from within the orchestral focused excerpt approach, and part accessibility (public domain vs. under copyright). With these factors, excerpts from the following ten operas were selected:

1. *Cosí fan tutte*, K. 588 (1790)
2. *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816)
3. *L'elisir d'amore* (1832)
4. *Aïda* (1871)
5. *Carmen* (1873-74)
6. *Otello* (1887)
7. *Manon Lescaut* (1893)
8. *Salome*, Op. 54 (1905)
9. *Peter Grimes* (1945)
10. *The Rake's Progress* (1947-1951)

Structure for the Examination and Discussion of Each Excerpt

The discussion of each excerpt includes musicological, music theoretical, and pedagogical analyses, as well as items for further discovery as appropriate. Each excerpt is explored using more or less the same model to help provide a consistent structure of examination and discussion:

- Introduction of Opera & Bassoon Excerpt(s)
- Pedagogy & Performance Discussion
 - Musical Connection
 - Technique
 - Practice Suggestions
 - Sound Production
 - Musical Gesture, Pacing, & Musical Map
- Further Discovery
 - Suggested Listening & Viewing
 - Any additional notable excerpt(s) from that opera

Each opera is introduced by brief details such as composer, librettist(s), source material (if any), type of opera with the number of acts and language, and premiere information followed by the opera synopsis.

The bassoon excerpt is discussed after this broad introduction of the operatic work. This is first done with presentation and description of the scene which contains the bassoon excerpt(s), followed by the clean part or derivative engraving of the bassoon excerpt, and any relevant libretto to the scene.

The excerpt is then discussed in greater depth in regard to pedagogy and performance including subsections of musical connection, technique with practice suggestions, sound production, and musical gesture and pacing including a suggested musical map. The purpose behind these discussion areas is to assist with performance execution and interpretation, facility, and performance.

As mentioned, the pedagogy and performance area are framed within musical connection, musical technique, practice techniques and exercises, sound production, and musical gesture and pacing. The bassoon-specific discussions are rooted within my own pedagogical philosophy, which has been influenced and informed by my bassoon mentors Robert Barris, William Buchman, William Ludwig,

Kathleen McLean, and Arthur Weisberg, as well as my own discovery and experimentation, and experience of over 15 years of applied bassoon and chamber instruction.

Musical Connection is a blended discussion of objective and subjective concepts and/or ideas that relate the bassoon excerpt to the scene's happenings, the larger full opera plot or story line, and/or connection to a character(s). The purpose of providing a brief discussion of musical connection is to help relate the bassoon passage to the larger story and composition; to make that connection of the passage being more than notes and rhythms, and to find a deeper meaning. It is also the expectation that a brief connection snapshot can offer a starting point for bassoonists to continue their own discovery of musicological and music theoretical concepts, as they relate to the larger body of the work and/or genre.

Each technique, practice suggestion, and sound production sub-areas contains discussion of a few key elements and topics. These areas provide an introduction to technical and sonic discussions but are not meant to be the only ones that can be discussed or examined in relation to the respective excerpt. The final pedagogy and performance discussion section is devoted to musicianship by discussion of musical gesture and pacing with a provided suggested musical map.

The last two sections of each excerpt entry can be classified as for further discovery. Listed here are suggestions of recordings and videos for listening and viewing of the opera and bassoon passage. There are four to five listening/viewing suggestions provided for each opera. The deciding factors of which recordings to include consisted of reputation of conductor, reputation of opera house, reputation of vocal lead(s), desire to include both American and European opera houses, and/or historical significance. Additionally, it is not uncommon that a particular opera has multiple noteworthy passages for the bassoon. As not all passages from a particular opera were able to be discussed to remain within scope of the final project, these noteworthy and/or significant passages are listed for further exploration.

Before diving into the ten excerpts, readers are presented with a pedagogy and glossary resource (chapter 4). This pedagogy and glossary resource contains pedagogical concepts and terms, description and explanation of six practice techniques and exercises, definitions of musicology and theoretical terms,

and a notation legend for the musical map markings that appear throughout the ten primary excerpt entries.

Sources, Resources, Materials, and Tools Used

Writing a final project in the twenty-first century during the COVID-19 era allowed for and necessitated a greater dependency on electronic sources. This included finding and using online sources for parts, scores, audio/visual media, and scholarly resources.

As mentioned above, one of the factors in deciding which opera excerpts to examine at the time of this final project was part accessibility. For all operas that exist in the public domain (PD), bassoon parts (excerpts) and score examples came from one of three places: 1) International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP) / Petrucci Music Library, a virtual library of PD music parts, scores, and licensed recordings, 2) a derivative I created from a PD score or part using music notation software, or 3) a personally owned score/part. IMSLP was the primary location for sourcing bassoon parts and scores. The rationale for heavy reliance on IMSLP is that the vast majority of musicians have easy access without a financial burden in obtaining parts and scores from IMSLP. PD scores not found on IMSLP were accessed through IU Media Collections Online or HathiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Service, both available through the IUCAT system.

For the operas whose scores and parts remain under copyright and copyright for hire (*Peter Grimes* and *The Rake's Progress*), print requests were sought from the publisher and copyright holder, Boosey & Hawkes Ltd. / Concord Music. As a former ensemble librarian with approximately five years' experience, I reached out to a friend and colleague within the field, Alizabeth Nowland the Performance Librarian for the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, & Dance, for guidance in the print request process. A rather easy and simple process, I received *in gratis* for reprint permissions of *Peter Grimes* and *The Rake's Progress* for part and score inclusion within this final project.

Audio and visual media, provided in the suggested listening and viewing sections, were found on online platforms and repositories such as IU Media Collections Online, NAXOS, MET OnDemand, Alexander Street, and Spotify. Additionally, I repeatedly used (and preferred) scholarly e-sources such as the libretto collections of Nico Castel, Nicholas Martin's *The Opera Manual*, and Oxford Music Online.

Sibelius Music Notation Software was used to create derivatives when parts/scores were not used, as well as to create the musical map examples. Adobe Photoshop was used to clean up and/or adjust spacing of scores and parts and allowed for easy copy and paste into Microsoft Word Document.

Scientific octave is identification used throughout when discussing specific pitches. The online *Chicago Manual of Style* available through the Cook Music Library was used for footnotes and bibliographic entries.

Chapter 4: PEDAGOGY & GLOSSARY

Please refer to this chapter for more complete explanation and definitions of many concepts, terms, and notations seen within the ten excerpts. By no means is this list exhaustive of all concepts and terms at one's disposal for the continued study of music, bassoon, and opera excerpts, but simply a sampling of those discussed within this collection.

Pedagogical Concepts & Terms

“Articulation on the Air”: A pedagogical concept of allowing the airstream to do the work so as not to over articulate or articulate too strongly. The tongue's action should serve as the separator of the air stream to achieve the desired note length, allowing the airstream and air support to create the resulting sound.

Blip: This is a term used to describe erroneous sounds and/or pitches in between two notes when fingering technique is not precise or is unclear. In fast, articulated passages blips can be identified when the passage is slurred as a practice technique.

Breathe-Set-Go (BSG): This is the preparation process to sound a note on the bassoon. BSG plan should be devised within time or on the pulse; inner pulse should be felt. This concept is discussed in many of the excerpts examined.

Breathe: The inhalation. On the breath inwards, it is important to keep a low breath sound, such as “HO.” This helps to keep the breath and back of the tongue low. Inhaling with a high breath and tongue can lead to tension and narrowing of the glottis (the opening of the throat for vocal cords) as well as high and tense shoulders causing the resultant sound to be pinched and thin.

Set: The act of closing the lips around the reed in a soft-cushioned embouchure, engaging the obliques and core in preparation and support of the sound to come, setting the tongue on the reed, and beginning air stream movement. Engaging the lip muscles, without a brittle or teeth-focused embouchure.

Go: The release of the tongue from the reed resulting in the air stream going through the reed to produce desired sound.

Cracking: The erroneous, non-musical sound that is the result of ineffective, inappropriate size of and/or timing with half-hole technique, lack of speaker key engagement, air stream support, or other. See Half-Hole and Speaker Keys.

Double Tonguing: A tonguing technique to help in execution of fast articulated passages while performing one articulation on the reed and the second articulation on the roof of the mouth. Constant air stream is vital to the process. There are many syllable pairings to select from, and even alternate between depending on passage and register.

Example Double Tonguing Syllable Pairings:

Taa – Kaa	Dee – Gee
Tee – Kee	Doo – Goo
Tic – Kit	

Flicking / Venting: This refers to the engagement of left-hand speaker keys to prevent and reduce cracking on specific notes: A4, A#4, B4, C4, and sometimes D4.

Flicking: The touch and release of a speaker key.

Venting: The depression of a speaker key.

Forked Fingers: A fingering concept where the index and ring fingers are down, and the middle finger is raised; can also be applied to any fingering where a finger in between two others is in a contrary position to the outer two.

Daily Routine: The daily exercises of music and bassoon fundamentals, with practice tools such as metronome, tuner, and/or drone, including but not limited to:

- Scales: major, minor (all varieties), chromatic, pentatonic, octatonic, blues, whole tone
- Scales in intervals: thirds, fourths, fifths
- Arpeggios: triads, sevenths
- Long Tones with and without varying tapers
- Articulation exercises: variety of attacks and releases
- Articulation speed exercises: single and double tonguing

Half Hole: The slight pivot or turn of a finger to release air from a tone hole to prevent or eliminate cracking. Most commonly referenced in discussion of the left-hand index finger half hole of notes F#3, G3, and G#3. Other half-hole notes might include A3 (LH3), F#4 (LH2), and D5 (LH2).

“Goldilocks”: The concept of making sure the half hole for each respective note is “just right.”

For instance, the half hole for F#3 is large, for G3 is medium, and for G3# is a sliver.

Obliques (use/engagement of): Obliques are muscles that make up two layers (external and internal obliques) of the abdominal wall located on the sides of abdomen. Muscles which when engaged are pushed out or pushed away.

Note Groupings: The use of small groupings of notes to give life and musical gesture to a phrase, to discern if a passage is “going to” or “coming from” somewhere. Also, a way energize airstream and/or fingers for musical facility of a passage.

Play to the Contour of the Line: A musical concept of using the visual shape of the line to make phrasing decisions. For example, to *crescendo* when a line visually arises in range and to *decrescendo* when a line visually descends in range.

Posture (relaxation): Whether seated or standing, a posture free from tension is most desired: shoulders should be low and slightly back to open up the chest, arms from shoulders through elbow through wrist and fingers should have soft arc (“ballet” arms), fingers should be slightly rounded free from tension, head should float with spine/back pulled up to not slouch over, and bassoon should come to you.

Quick Breath: A fast way to intake air quickly especially when there is not enough time in the musical passage to take a full breath. The embouchure should stay around the reed as much as possible and instead of lowering/raising the jaw to inhale, for a quick breath air should be inhaled from the corners or sides of the mouth. A low vowel such as OH should be used on inhale to keep breath less audible and to keep throat relaxed and open.

“Sing It How You Would Play It”: The pedagogical concept of stepping away from the bassoon to sing/conduct the passage. Focus should be on freeing oneself into the musical passage; another way to internalize the musical line.

Soft Cushion Embouchure: A type of possible bassoon embouchure; refers to: the lips creating a seal around the reed without engaging the teeth; a natural overbite is ok but not to be encouraged; lips can roll over the teeth, will vary bassoonist to bassoonist with individual setup; the corners of the lips should be closed towards the center of the mouth; kiss muscles to make a “whistle, “ “straw” or “blow-out-the-candles” lip shape. Without engaging the teeth through a biting, or a jaw hinge motion.

Placement of Embouchure: There can be a need for variability of where the embouchure is

positioned on the reed blade depending on reed, register, etc. Three common position are at the tip of the reed, at the first wire, and in the middle of the blade. A soft cushion embouchure where the teeth are not engaged allows for bassoonists to quickly adjust embouchure placement when necessary.

Sonic Texture: This describes the resultant sound produced per note in relation to one another. Often discussed in terms of notes popping out of the texture (or line); not allowing the acoustical design of the bassoon to go unchecked. Bassoonists should be in control of all sounds produced and not allow the bassoon to “play itself”. Some might refer to this as matching color, or matching note to note.

Speaker/Vent Keys: The A, C, and D keys on the tenor joint of the bassoon.

Stopped *Staccato*: A *staccato* note that has an abrupt sonic ending, not allowed to ring / taper. Executed by returning the tongue to the tip of the reed to stop the sound.

“Tongue to Your Fingers”: The psychological connection of synchronizing the timing of the tongue articulation and the finger movements, especially in fast articulated passages.

Torquing (Embouchure, Jaw): The pressurizing of the reed by the twist of the head. A torque of the head can be down on the either the x axis, y axis, or a combination of both, to change pressure on the blades of the reeds. A technique used to assist with dampening of sound and tone color.

Voicings (Vowels): These are the shapes created in the throat / glottis which affect tone and color of produced sound; vowel usage within the oral cavity. The glottis should remain open. Vowels should be played as if singing the vowels with air stream used through the process. There are three main vowels used in discussion of the ten excerpts:

OH: Lowers the back of the tongue, elongates the throat and glottis; ideal for low register, mid-registers, and to aid in lowering the pitch of sharp tendency notes; a good vowel to move to in a descending leap; helps to round out sound.

AY: A more focused, slightly smaller throat and glottis pitched in the middle; can help to raise pitch and provide a bit of brightness to the sound.

EE: The smallest of the vowels pitching at the top of the throat; can have a nasal/thinning effect of the sound; helps to raise pitch and useful in large ascending leaps.

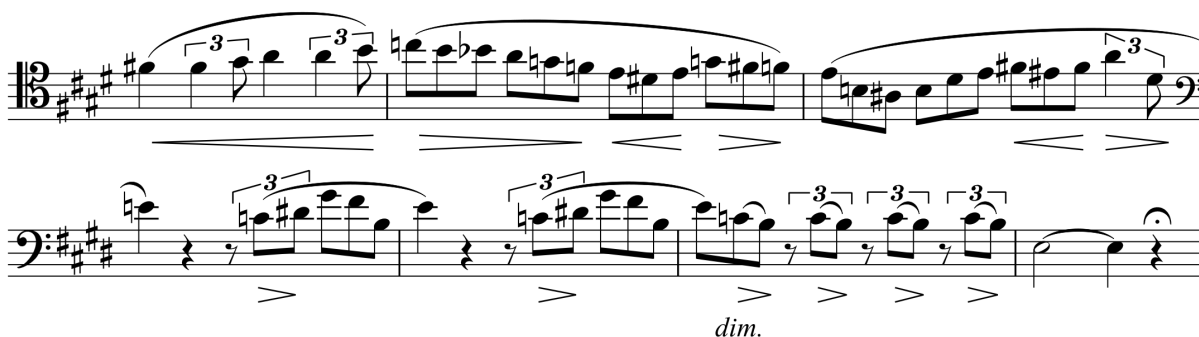
Other vowel options are: **AH**, **EYE**, **OO**, **OW**, and **OY**.

Low tongue, open throat: The concept of tongue placement and throat width often discussed in relation to breathing and vowel/voicings. Low tongue placement refers to the tongue being position on the floor of the mouth, versus being bunched or angled/pitched to the back of the throat high toward the roof of the mouth.

Practice Techniques & Exercises

Throughout the discussion of the ten excerpts there are six practice techniques and exercises suggested and referenced. Provided here are descriptions of each technique along with an example. Each example is a notable opera excerpt that was not selected for inclusion with ten primary excerpts for this project but holds a place in the canon of bassoon opera excerpts.

Choreography of the Fingers: An exercise of simplifying the printed rhythm of a passage in order to focus on intentional fingering learning, implementation, and retention. This is an ideal exercise for passages that contain tricky technical passages, and/or awkward fingerings. When working with this exercise, make sure there is clear air stream movement between notes; air stream is a primary need within basic dynamic and flowing note grouping concepts. This practice technique can be complemented with Forward/Backward.



Example 4.1: Giuseppe Verdi, *I vespri siciliani* (1855), bassoon I part, bar 3 after reh B to fermata



Example 4.2: Choreography of the Fingers (passage simplification), Giuseppe Verdi, *I vespri siciliani* (1855), bassoon I part, 5 bars before fermata

Forward/Backward: The exercise of playing a passage reading/playing forwards (to the right) and then immediately reading/playing in reverse (to the left) looping the passage without stopping at the direction change. This is best applied to short passages of a few notes or measures. The printed/given articulation of the passage should be used. This practice technique can be complemented with Choreography of the Fingers.

102

6/8

sf

103

Example 4.3: Richard Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911), bassoon I part, Act II, reh 102-103

Forward →

← Backward

Example 4.4: Forward/Backward, Richard Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911), bassoon I part, Act II, 4 bars before reh 103

Popcorn Practice: This is the process of removing notes within a passage to focus on seeing the patterns within a phrase/measure, as well as to assist rhythmic precision and intention in regard to note groupings. When executing this practice technique, the embouchure should not be removed during every rest period; the embouchure should only be removed when required for an actual breath. This practice technique can be complemented with Up10/Down5.

p *pp*

C

D

dim. *poco rit.*

E

a tempo

Example 4.5: Giuseppe Verdi, *Don Carlo* (4 Act Version, 1884), bassoon I part, Act I, No. 2, 2 bars before reh C to reh E

Pattern 1:

Pattern 2:

Pattern 3:



Example 4.6: Popcorn Practice (3 examples), Giuseppe Verdi, *Don Carlo* (4 Act Version, 1884), bassoon I part, Act I, No. 2, reh D for 10 bars

Practice Rhythms: The exercise of changing the notated rhythm to various patterns comprised of long and short rhythmic values within duple and triple meters. In personal practice, the inverse of each pattern should also be performed. On the long notes, consideration should be given to the synchronous change of fingerings, voicings, and/or articulation to get to the short note. This is best applied to a phrase or a brief passage. This practice technique can be complemented with Up10/Down5.

Duple Subdivision Variant Suggestions:

Straight:	
Long – Short:	
Short – Long:	
Long – Short – Short:	
Short – Short – Long:	
Short – Long – Short:	

Triple Subdivision Variant Suggestions:

Straight: 

Long – Short: 

Short – Long: 

Long – Short – Medium: 


Medium – Long – Short: 

“Odd” Subdivision Suggestions:

un - i - ver - si - ty

Quintuplets
 (“University”) 

al - i - ga - tor - an - i - mal

Septuplets
 (“Alligator Animal”) 

Example 4.7: Subdivision Practice Rhythms Subdivision Suggestions

bedeutend langsamer ($\frac{4}{4}$), aber immer noch sehr bewegt.

fff ♩
Leidenschaft.

mit Ausserster 141

♩ *ff*

♩

142 ♩

Example 4.8: Richard Strauss, *Salome* (1905), bassoon I part, 6 bars before reh 141 to reh 142

Practice Rhythm isolation of bars 5-7 after reh 141

Duple, Long-Short:

Triple, Long-Short-Medium:

Quintuplets:

Example 4.9: Practice Rhythms (isolations), Richard Strauss, *Salome* (1905), bassoon I part, bars 5-7 after reh 141

Off-Beat Metronome: The exercise of metronome practice with the metronome click on any interior rhythmic subdivision that is not a downbeat. This is an exercise to work on metric precision of all subdivisions and vertical alignment.



Example 4.10: Bedřich Smetana *Prodaná nevěsta* (“*The Bartered Bride*”) (1863-1870), bassoon I part, Overture, 2 bars before reh A to 12 bars after reh A

Off-Beat Metronome (bars 5-9 after reh A):

On the “And” (the third subdivision):



To be played as:



On the “E” (the second subdivision):



To be played as:



On the “A” (the fourth subdivision):



To be played as:



Example 4.11: Off-Beat Metronome, Bedřich Smetana *Prodaná nevěsta* (“The Bartered Bride”) (1863-1870), bassoon I part, Overture, bars 5-9 after reh A

Up10/Down5: This is an exercise of metronome practice to increase *tempo* and is best applied to a phrase or brief passage. “Up10” refers to increasing the current *tempo* beyond what is comfortable in order to push oneself; “Down5” refers to dropping the “too fast” *tempo* to something reasonable and achievable. The numbers 10 and 5 are arbitrary: the “down” should be more or less half of the “up.” For example, Up8/Down4, Up6/Down3; if using a pre-set metronome with built-in metronome beats you can do up two clicks, down one click. The passage should be played at least 3 times before changing *tempo* marking. This practice technique can be complemented with Choreography of the Fingers, Forward/Backwards, Popcorn Practice, Practice Rhythms, and Off-Beat Metronome exercises.



Example 4.12: W.A. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* (1791), bassoon I part, Overture, bars 27-32

Goal Tempo: half note = 90-96

Start; half note = 50

Up 10: half note = 60

Down 5: half note = 55

Up 10: half note = 65

Down 5: half note = 60

Etc. Continue with the process until the goal tempo is achieved.

Example 4.13: Up10/Down5, Sample Goal and Progress Chart

Musical Glossary

Provided here are musical terms that appear within and others that might be helpful when navigating the ten primary excerpts.

Agogic (accent): An accent of weight or length demanded by the musical phrase and the character of the music; opposed to a dynamic or metric accent. Appears within: *L'elisir d'amore*, *Carmen*.

Aria: Translated from the Italian language meaning “air.” An *aria* is a lyrical piece for one voice, usually, with or without instrumental accompaniment.¹ An *aria* can be a standalone work or taken from a larger scale work such as an opera, oratorio, or cantata.² The term *aria* can also mean melody or tune.³ Appears within: *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Otello*, *Manon Lescaut*, *The Rake's Progress*.

Arioso: Translated from the Italian language meaning “airy.” Arioso is a type of vocal piece commonly found in opera or oratorio.⁴ The arioso style can be described as “songlike,” blending aspects of lyrical *aria* and declamatory *recitative*.⁵ Appears within: *Peter Grimes*.

Calando: Translated from the Italian language meaning “to lower” or “to drop.” This is a musical direction to grow softer dynamically and (sometimes) slower in *tempo*.⁶ Appears within: *L'elisir d'amore*.

¹ Jack Westrup, et al., “Aria,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Julian Budden, et al., “Arioso,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ David Fallows, “Calando,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Commedia (per musica): Another term used to mean “comic opera.”⁷ Appears within: *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Con espressione: Translates from the Italian language meaning “with expression.” Can also mean “with feeling.” Appears within: *Aïda*.

Dramma (drama) lirico: Italian term that translate to “opera drama.” Appears within: *Otello* and *Manon Lescaut*.

Enharmonic: A music theory term that describes two notes that are the same sounding pitch but spelled differently. Ex. B-flat is the same sounding pitch as A-sharp. Appears within: *Salome*.

Free Canon: A canon where the imitating line does not follow exactly to the first voice.⁸ Appears within: *The Rake’s Progress*.

Giovane scuola: Translates from the Italian language meaning “young school.” The term *giovane scuola* was first used to describe a cohort of “Italian opera composers born just after the middle of the 19th century, comprising Alfredo Catalani, [Antonio] Smareglia, [Ruggero] Leoncavallo, [Giacomo] Puccini, Alberto Franchetti, [Petro] Mascagni, [Umberto] Giordano and [Francesco] Cilea.”⁹ Eventually the term *giovane scuola* became to describe those composers who used the *verismo* style within their compositions. This composition rhetoric is described as “passionate tension alternates with sentimental

⁷ “Commedia per musica,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed March 2, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁸ Alfred Mann et al., “Canon,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 26, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁹ Budden, Julian, “Giovane scuola,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

languor, and delicacy with violence, especially in the vocal lines; *recitatives*, solo pieces and ensembles enjoy equality of status, textural cohesion being supplied by the use of orchestral motifs; and there is a total absence of bel canto coloratura.”¹⁰ Appears within: *Manon Lesaut*.

Grand Opera: A serious form of opera in the Romantic period that was sung throughout and typically includes five acts that was “grandiose in conception and impressively staged.”¹¹ Opera style that was influential on Giuseppe Verdi and especially *Aïda*. Appears within: *Aïda*.

Legato: Translates from the Italian language meaning “bound.” Playing notes consecutively connected without a break in sound. A direction to play a passage smoothly. The slur marking is a common musical notation to denote legato within twentieth century notation.¹² Appears within: *Aïda*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Rake’s Progress*.

Melisma: A type of musical ornament or embellishment where more than one note is sung to a syllable. The opposite of syllabic where there is one note to each syllable.¹³ Appears within: *Così fan tutte*.

Melodramma giocoso: Translates from the Italian language meaning playful melodrama” or “melodrama with jokes”; stems from the term *dramma giocoso* (“jocular drama”), a term used to describe the libretto of a comic opera.¹⁴ Appears within: *L’elisir d’amore*.

¹⁰ Matteo Sansone, “Verismo,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹¹ M. Elizabeth C Bartlet, “Grand opéra,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed March 6, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹² Geoffrey Chew, “Legato,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹³ Richard Crocker, “Melisma,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹⁴ “Dramma giocoso,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed March 6, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Musikdrama: Translates from German language meaning “music drama.” A term used for a dramatic work where music takes a primary role.¹⁵ This term is generally associated with Richard Wagner and specifically his operas from *Das Rheingold* onward.¹⁶ Appears within: *Salome*.

Nachschlag: A type of musical ornament usually at the end of a trill. A turn. Appears within operas: *Carmen*, *Manon Lescaut*.

Obbligato: A necessary or essential instrumental part that is subordinate to the principal melody and should not be omitted.¹⁷ Within music for voice with instruments, an obbligato is a required, indispensable, or “prominent instrumental part in an *aria* or other number.”¹⁸ Appears within: *L’elisir d’amore*.

Opera buffa: Light, comic opera; prominent in Italy and abroad during the 18th century.¹⁹ Appears within: *Così fan tutte*.

Opéra comique: French light opera; term used for French stage work during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries that contained vocal, instrumental, and *recitative*.²⁰ In 19th century France, opera with spoken dialogue regardless if plot was comic or tragic.²¹ A term that librettists and composers often struggled with the application to their works where comic elements were not as important to dramatic or

¹⁵ Barry Millington, “Music Drama,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed March 6, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ David Fuller, “Obbligato,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Piero Weiss and Julian Budden, “Opera buffa,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed February 22, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²⁰ M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet and Rochard Langham Smith, “Opera Comique,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed March 6, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²¹ Donald Jay Grout, J. Peter Burkholder, and Claude V Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), A13.

melodramatic ones; “the use (or misuse) of the term to cover all French operas with spoken dialogue, at least those given at the Opéra-Comique, seems to date from the late 19th century.”²² Appears within: *Carmen*.

Operatic Ensemble Finale: Developed during the 18th century. In Italian *opera buffa*, after about ca.1750, most ensemble finales were the “chain” type: distinct sections “usually differentiated in key, metre and *tempo*, succeeded each other in response to a developing dramatic situation.”²³ It is common for these types of finales to “...begin and end in the same key and visit nearly related keys in their course...tempos may fluctuate in accordance with the action, but there is often an overall acceleration.”²⁴ Appears within: *Così fan tutte*.

Ostinato (rhythm): A repeated, persistent rhythm.²⁵ Appears within: *Aïda*, *The Rake’s Progress*.

Pentatonic: A scale, musical style, or system that uses five notes per octave.²⁶ Appears within: *Manon Lescaut*.

Recitative: Vocal writing that resembles speech; dramatic dialogue in a vocal, sung style.²⁷ Appears within: *The Rake’s Progress*.

²² M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet and Rochard Langham Smith, “Opera Comique,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed March 6, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²³ Michael Tilmouth, “Finale,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed February 22, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Laure Schnaper, “Ostinato,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²⁶ Jeremy Day-O’Connell, “Pentatonic,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²⁷ Dale Monson, et al., “Recitative,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed March 20, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Romanza: Translates from the Italian language meaning “romance.” Coming from the fifteenth century, originally referring to mean ballad or popular song. The term has come to mean a sentimental, tender, or romantic tale quality in strophic form.²⁸ Appears within: *L’elisir d’amore*.

Scena: a term in opera used to mean “the stage, the scene represented on the stage, [or] a division of an act.”²⁹ Appears within: *The Rake’s Progress*.

Set Piece: A piece of music from within an opera that can stand alone, noted by a recognizable beginning and end.³⁰ Appears within: *Salome*.

Soli: a term used to describe multiple solos; or a term to denote a consortium of musicians playing the same material. Appears within: *Carmen*.

Stretta: Translates from the Italian language meaning “close,” “grip,” or “tightening.” In opera, the *stretta* section is an accelerated, concluding section; traditionally located at the end of interior act finales in eighteenth century opera buffa to conclude the “ensemble of confusion.”³¹ Appears within: *Così fan tutte*.

Strophic (form): A term to describe the form of songs where the text of all verses or stanzas are sung to the same music.³² Strophic (form) is the opposite of through-composed. Appears within: *L’elisir d’amore*.

²⁸ Jack Sage, et al., “Romance,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>

²⁹ Jack Westrup, “Scena,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³⁰ Julian Budden, “Set piece,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³¹ Julian Budden, “Stretta,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³² Michael Tilmouth, “Strophic,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Syllabic (style): A type of text setting when there is one note per syllable of text.³³ This is in contrast to the melismatic style. Appears within: *Aida*.

Terraced Dynamics: Dynamic shifts without gradual changes in between. A musical gesture concept of providing dynamic markers within a passage. Appears within: *Il barbiere d'Siviglia*.

Tetra Scales: A set of four notes within an octave. Appears within: *Otello* (excerpt 1).

Through-composed: A term to describe a work with continued “musical thought and invention”; the form of songs where the music for each stanza of text is set to different music.³⁴ The term can be applied to “operas whose librettos are set to music throughout.”³⁵ Appears within: *Manon Lescaut*, *Peter Grimes*.

Verismo: Translates from the Italian language meaning “realism.” A post-Romantic style, *Verismo* began as an Italian literary movement within the 1870s.³⁶ *Verismo* style focuses on the portrayal of more realistic subject matter and people.³⁷ *Verismo* is a term often used to generalize the musical style of the *giovane scuola*.³⁸ Pietro Mascagni’s opera *Cavalleria rusticana* is considered the first *verismo* opera.³⁹ Appears within: *Manon Lesaut*.

³³ “Syllabic style,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³⁴ Ian Runbold, “Through-composed,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Matteo Sansone, “Verismo,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*




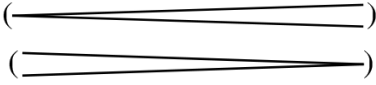
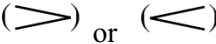
³⁹ *Ibid.*

Word-Painting: A musical technique where the text or libretto is reflected within the musical gesture.⁴⁰

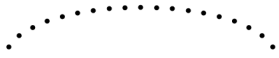
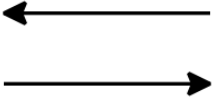
Also known as tone painting or text painting. Appears within: *Otello*.

Musical Map & Notations

Musical Map is a term used to describe an individual's musical, phrasing, or other markings within a part or score. All ten primary excerpts discussed include a sample musical map. Below is a legend for markings included.

Lift		A non-emphasis of a particular note; lift, tapered up
Lift/Place		A non-emphasis of a note followed by a weighted placement; in some instances, the lifted note might be slightly shortened
Tenuto/Agogic Line		Lengthening or weighted emphasis on a particular note
Bracketed crescendo/decrescendo (large)		Phrase direction suggestions, air stream movement. (Can vary to include subtle or vibrant hairpins)
Note Grouping (small crescendo/decrescendo markings)		Note grouping gestures to aid in determining whether the gesture is going to or coming from somewhere

⁴⁰ Tim Carter, "Word-painting," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Dotted Slurs		Connection of air stream engagement, of line, and/or no break/breath
Parenthesized Dynamics	Ex: (<i>mp</i>) (<i>mf</i>) (<i>f</i>)	Suggested dynamic which might differ from composer/editor direction
Rounded Note Release	um	A soft, rounded ending of a note by subtle taper. e.g., like when saying the word “um”
Change of <i>tempo</i>		A pull back or push forward of <i>tempo</i>
Comma	,	Suggested breath and/or lift in time or sound
Simile	sim.	To play something similar as previously marked or notated.
Speaker Key Engagement	X	Symbol to indicate use of speaker key. If included with a line (—), denotes vent for duration of line (—).

Chapter 5: COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Così fan tutte, K. 588 (1790)

Music: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Libretto: Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749-1838)¹

Opera buffa in Italian in 2 Acts

Premiered: Vienna, Burgtheater (January 26, 1790)²

Opera Synopsis

The old, cynical Don Alfonso wagers officers Guglielmo and Ferrando that their respective girlfriends, sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella, are unfaithful. The three men concoct a plan to tell the girls that Guglielmo and Ferrando have been called to war, then dressed in disguise the men will seduce each other's girlfriend.³ Don Alfonso announces to Fiordiligi and Dorabella that their men have been called to war. As the two couples say their goodbyes, the ladies are quite emotional, and the men are confident that they will win the bet.

The maid Despina suggests to the girls that they find new lovers. Don Alfonso seeks out Despina and tell her of the scheme that's been set in motion. Don Alfonso bribes Despina to introduce Fiordiligi and Dorabella to two "foreign friends" of his (really Guglielmo and Ferrando in disguise).⁴ Not recognizing the two "foreign friends," the girls are angered that unknown men are in their house and resist their advances.⁵ The disguised Guglielmo and Ferrando profess their love to the ladies by drinking poison. Not actually consuming poison, the men fake falling into comas and the sisters call for help. Despina, now disguised as a doctor, enters and "cures" the men.

¹ Tim Carter, "Da Ponte, Lorenzo (opera)," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed November 23, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Julian Ruston, "Così fan tutte," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed November 23, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³ Nico Castel, trans., "Così fan tutte," in *The Libretto of Mozart's Complete Opera*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1997-c.1998), 123.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

The sisters, now having second thoughts, decide to pair off with the two foreigner visitors: Ferrando with Fiordiligi and Guglielmo with Dorabella.⁶ The men try their luck at seducing the ladies: Fiordiligi turns her nose at the disguised Ferrando's attempts but continues to grapple with her attraction to him; Guglielmo gives Dorabella a locket and in return she gives him a medallion (which she received from Ferrando). The two men meet to discuss their progress. Fiordiligi wants to go with Dorabella to the front lines of the war to die with their lovers in battle. Guglielmo overhears these plans and is impressed; Ferrando renews his advances on Fiordiligi, and she gives in. Guglielmo is angered, but Don Alfonso advises to forgive the ladies and marry them anyway because "Così fan tutte" ("Women are like that").⁷

A double wedding is being planned for the sisters with their "foreigners."⁸ Don Alfonso brings in a notary, really Despina in disguise, and the sisters sign their marriage contracts. Military music is heard from a distance signaling the return of Guglielmo and Ferrando. The ladies panic and the "foreigners" flee. Guglielmo and Ferrando return out of their disguises and find the marriage contracts. Guglielmo and Ferrando confront Fiordiligi and Dorabella who confess everything, and Don Alfonso reveals the story. In the end, all is forgiven.⁹

Act I, No. 18 Finale: bar 636 to downbeat of bar 643 ("Dammi un bacio")

Scene Information

The sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella are in the garden when the two "foreigners" walk on to the scene. The men exclaim that consuming "poison" will rid them of their agony of the sisters not giving into their love. Taking the "poison," Guglielmo and Ferrando fake passing out into a coma. Distressed

⁶ Ibid., 124.

⁷ Ibid., 124.

⁸ Ibid., 124.

⁹ Ibid., 124.

and panicking, the sisters call on Despina for help. Despina checks the men’s vitals and tells the sisters there are still signs of life. Unsure what to do, again they call for help: Despina and Don Alfonso go to fetch a doctor. The sisters sob over the “foreigners” in a display of concern. Don Alfonso returns with the “doctor”, which is really Despina in disguise. In a display of pageantry, the “doctor” cures the gentlemen with a magnet. Now faking disorientation, the “foreigners” believe that Fiordiligi and Dorabella are Greek goddesses and profess their love. As the men cling to the sisters, Don Alfonso and the “doctor” explain that the “foreigners” flirtation is a side effect of the poison and that it will eventually wear off. The girls struggle to resist their advances and claim that such advances will tarnish their honor. The men beg for a kiss to which the girls respond with anger, cursing the men to go the devil. Guiglielmo, Ferrando, Don Alfonso, and Despina wonder if the sisters’ anger will turn into love. It is within the Act I finale’s *stretta* “Dammi un bacio” (“Give me a kiss”) that the bassoon excerpt joins Ferrando in a unison melisma.



Example 5.1: W.A. Mozart, *Così fan tutte*, bassoon I part, bar 636 to downbeat of bar 643

Libretto¹⁰

FERRANDO

nè vorrei che tanto fuoco terminasse in quel d'amor.

I wouldn't wish that such fire should end in that of love

(I wouldn't wish that fire to end up as fire of love.)

¹⁰ Nico Castel, trans., “*Così fan tutte*,” in *The Libretto of Mozart's Complete Opera*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1997-c.1998), 189.

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

The Act I Finale *stretta* is one of the more exciting moments of the first act. It is here that the plot's twists and comedic confusion culminates in the ensemble finale comprised of an energetic orchestra and vocal sextet driving to the act I curtain close.

While beginning in D major, by the time the bassoon passage appears in unison with Ferrando, the key area is in E minor. The bassoon passage with Ferrando is heard two times before returning into D major for the final presto which races the ensemble to the finale's conclusion. Ferrando and the bassoon *melisma* serves as an ornament over the tutti vocal ensemble and orchestra. It is at this point that the "foreigners" are asking themselves if the sisters' anger will turn into love, while Fiordiligi and Dorabella are cursing their flirtations and advances.

Technique & Practice

The excerpt spans one octave between A3-A4 within the middle-low tenor register. Incorporating scales and various scalar and arpeggio daily routine passages can aid in comfortability and transference to facilitate this passage.

The biggest challenge with this excerpt is speed within the given key signature and accidentals. After the note and fingering patterns are learned through practice exercises, such as choreography of the fingers and practice rhythm patterns, then bassoonists can focus on speed and *tempo* development. For speed development, a consecutive increase in metronome beats is one way to build speed. This method can be one directional, and for some this method could lead to a speed development plateau. The up10/down5 exercise is a method to avoid getting stuck in practice efforts when working toward increasing *tempo*. As speed development continues, the employment of off-beat metronome exercise can help to support smoothness and equal spacing between all notes. A general *tempo* goal should be about half note equals 140.

With speed and cleanliness as important concerns, fingering selection decisions can help in making the passage easier to facilitate. For example, for the F#4-G4-F#4 oscillations in bars 2, 3, 4, and 6 of the passage, the use of front F#4 can be helpful so only RH2 needs to be lifted to sound G4. In bar 7, a trill F# of lifting RH23 can be helpful. One additional fingering suggestion is for A4 following G4 in bar 6. For the A4 here, the RH F key can be utilized rather than the standard G key fingering. Using this fingering will eliminate the forked finger oscillation when a standard A4 fingering is used. Deciding which fingering is best is a personal decision, one that differs from bassoonist to bassoonist, that has no bearing as long as the passage is executed cleanly and in *tempo*.

It can be common for many musicians to discover that fast, soft passages are some of the most difficult to execute. For this concern, fluidity and *piano* (dynamic) fingering technique are additional technical aspects to be conscientious of during practice of this passage. Bassoonists should strive to keep fingers and air stream as legato as possible. Legato fingers come from keeping the fingers as close to the body of the bassoon as possible during fingering changes within a relaxed body posture. A legato air stream, where each note is “bound” to one another, channeled, and focused through the instrument can also help with fluidity. For further discovery and exercises about these concepts, check out *.drills.* by Ole Kristian T. Dahl and Kaitlyn G. Cameron.

Sound Production

While the bassoon passage is within a *piano* dynamic, the bassoon is the only orchestral instrument playing this passage. As previously mentioned, the bassoon plays this line in unison with Ferrando. The *piano* dynamic can be taken as guidance to not cover the voice, but as only one of two performers playing the passage, it is probable that a dynamic greater than *piano* will be needed to be heard over a *tutti* orchestra and vocal sextet.

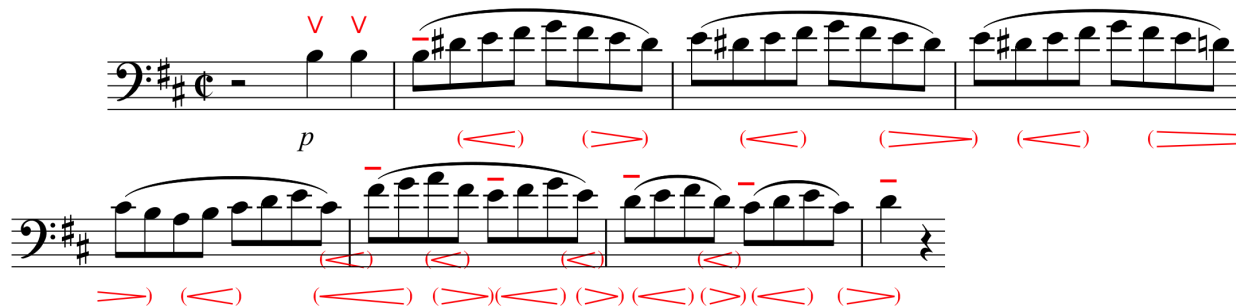
With the passage of a one octave range within the middle to low-tenor register, a vocal vowel of OH or AY can be used for the full duration. As there are no leaps greater than a third, the change of a vocal vowel should not be necessary, especially at such a quick *tempo*.

With only one half note beat rest prior to the bassoon excerpt, finding an opportunity to inhale can be a bit tricky. It is recommended to use a quick breath when inhaling during the BSG process with a low HO intake in order to get the necessary air needed and to enter the passage on time.

Musical Gesture and Pacing

The quick *tempo* necessitates quick airstream gestures of note groupings. By doing so, coupled with legato fingerings, and breathing mention above, this can provide a level of ease and flow, so bassoonists do not have to work so hard. For a scalar passage like this, using the airstream groupings in tandem with playing the contour of the lines is a simple means to execute the passage. The gestures and playing to the contour of line should remain within the soft dynamic. The second iteration of the passage leads into the final Presto; the finale Presto enters within a *subito forte* dynamic so it would be best to keep the second bassoon passage iteration within *piano* dynamic to allow for a clear dynamic contrast to be made.

The last measure, bar 7, of the passage should be articulated as noted. In this measure, Ferrando changes syllable per half note and the cadential I6/4-V motion is heard. The bassoon articulation on D4 and C#4 helps provide a bit of intensity and motion toward the tonic in the following bar.



Example 5.2: Musical Map, W.A. Mozart, *Così fan tutte*, bassoon I part, bar 636 to downbeat of bar 643

Suggested Listening & Viewing

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *Così fan tutte*. Chamber Orchestra of Europe. Yannick Nézet-Séguin. With Adam Plachetka, Angela Brower, Miah Persson, Rolando Villazón, Mojca Erdmann, Alessandro Corbelli. Released August 5, 2013. Deutsche Grammophon, 182 min.

———. *Così fan tutte*. The Metropolitan Opera, David Robertson. Performed March 31, 2018. The MET Opera on Demand, Recorded Broadcast, 2018. Video Stream, 195 min.

———. *Così fan tutte*. Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Sir Simon Rattle. With Hillevi Martinpelto, Alison Hagley, Gerald Finley, Kurt Streit, Ann Murray, Thomas Allen. Recorded Live December 1995. EMI Classics 7243 5 56170 26, 1996, compact discs.

———. *Così fan tutte*. Orchestra of the Royal Opera House. Colin Davis. With Stuart Burrows, Thomas Allen, Richard Van Allan, Kiri Te Kanawa, Agnes Baltsa. Recorded Live January 27, 1981, Royal Opera House, Covent Gardens. Opus Arte OACD9005D, 2008.

Additional notable excerpt from *Così fan tutte*

1. Overture, complete.

Chapter 6: IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

Il barbiere di Siviglia (1816)

Music: Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

Libretto: Cesare Sterbini (1784-1831)¹

Based on Pierre-Augustin Beaumarchais' *Le Barbier de Séville*²

Commedia in Italian in 2 Acts

Premiered: Teatro Argentina, Rome (February 20, 1816)³

Opera Synopsis

Count Almaviva, disguised as the poor student Lindoro, is joined in a serenade by his servant Fiorello and a small band of musicians on a street in Seville under the balcony of Dr. Bartolo's ward, Rosina.⁴ Rosina does not appear in the balcony, and the Count pays and dismisses the musicians. Enter Figaro who recognizes the Count; the Count tells Figaro that he wishes to remain in disguise. Enchanted by the Count's voice, Rosina remains under the strict, watchful eye of Bartolo with the help of Rosina's music teacher Don Basilio; Rosina is resolved to meet the man to which the voice belongs, known to her as Lindoro. At Figaro's encouragement, the Count sings another song to Rosina, and this time Rosina appears at her balcony dropping a note onto the street. Within the note Rosina declares her passion for the Count and asks him of his intentions. Figaro concocts a plan to get the Count close to Rosina; the Count will pose as a drunken soldier in need of quarters in Bartolo's house.⁵

Bartolo shares his suspicions with Basilio that he believes the Count is in town and in love with Rosina; Basilio suggests that Bartolo start a scandal to disgrace and get rid of the Count so then he can marry Rosina.⁶ Figaro enters, overhears Bartolo's and Basilio's plot, and manages a brief conversation with Rosina agreeing to deliver a note to Lindoro. Bartolo is annoyed and angered by Figaro, and he

¹ John Black, "Sterbini, Cesare," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed November 7, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Nico Castel, trans., "Il barbiere di Siviglia," in *Italian Belcanto Opera Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2000-c.2002), 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

questions Rosina and warns her not to dupe him.⁷ Now disguised as a drunken soldier, the Count forces his way into Bartolo's house requiring lodging, causing a ruckus argument. Figaro arrives with the noise, who attempts to calm the Count to no avail. The police arrive, and when the officer is about to arrest Lindoro, he stops and releases the Count after learning who he really is. Everyone except for Figaro is in a state of confusion.⁸

Now disguised as the substitute music teacher Don Alonso, the Count returns to Bartolo's home and convinces him that he is a pupil of Basilio and is in on their plot. Bartolo allows "Don Alonso" to give Rosina a music lesson; Rosina recognizes "Don Alonso" as "Lindoro"; as Bartolo falls asleep, the Count and Rosina declare their love. Figaro arrives to shave Bartolo; while gathering barbering implements, Figaro manages to find the key to Rosina's balcony. As Figaro shaves Bartolo, the Count and Rosina plot their elopement. Figaro and the Count leave; convinced by Bartolo that the Count has another lover, a broken-hearted Rosina agrees to marry Bartolo in the morning.⁹ In the middle of a thunderstorm, Figaro and the Count climb a ladder to Rosina's balcony and enter with the key Figaro grabbed; the count reveals his true identity to Rosina. Basilio, arriving with a notary, is bribed and held at gunpoint to serve as witness to the marriage of Rosina and the Count. Arriving with soldiers, Bartolo realizes he is too late; Figaro, Rosina, and the Count celebrate.¹⁰

⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁰ Ibid., 4.

Act I, Sc. 1: No. 2 Cavatina, reh 31 for 27 bars (“Largo al factotum della città”)

Scene Information

Count Almaviva, with help from Fiorello and street musicians, unsuccessfully serenaded Rosina from below her balcony. Dejected, the Count pays and dismisses the musicians, to which they all respond and leave in a noisy manner almost waking the neighborhood in the early morning. Wanting to wait to try to see Rosina without anyone witnessing him, the Count also dismisses Fiorello. The Count overhears someone coming toward him, he quickly hides so as not to be seen. Announced by a bright and vibrant orchestral statement leading to the quietly energized bassoon except, Figaro, the city’s factotum, makes his grand entrance onto the scene.

[31] *Allegro vivace*

pp

cresc.

ff

ff

ff

Example 6.1: Gioachino Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, bassoon I part, reh 31 for 27 bars

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

One of the most famous *arias* used and often parodied within popular culture, “Largo al factotum” signals the entry of the character Figaro, the opera’s jack-of-all-trades baritone. Arguably one of the most difficult baritone *arias*, the “explosive energy of the music establishes Figaro as a typically Rossinian creation full of impulse and concentrated energy.”¹¹ The energized excitement and gaiety of Figaro’s entrance follows Count Almaviva’s serenade to Rosina and a tussle of commotion between the street musicians. “Largo al factotum” is an *aria* of self-aggrandizing and boastfulness: Figaro proclaims that everyone loves him, that everyone asks for and wants him, and that he is the most useful person of all time.¹²

The orchestral accompaniment provides an exciting entrance with a bouncy grab of the audience’s attention in 6/8 meter and C major. The perpetual building of arpeggiated C chords and dynamic *crescendos* provide a boastful and pompous accompaniment for the baritone Figaro to display virtuosity and showmanship.

Libretto¹³

FIGARO

La la la lera, la la la la

Largo al factotum della città, largo!

Make way for the factotum of the city, make way!

La ran la la ran la la ran la

Presto a bottega che l'alba è già, presto!

Quickly to my shop for dawn is here, quickly!

La ran la la ran la la ran la

¹¹ Richard Osborne, “Barbiere di Siviglia, Il (ii),” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed November 22, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹² Nico Castel, trans., “Il barbiere di Siviglia,” in *Italian Belcanto Opera Libretti*, edited by and Marcie Stapp, (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2000-c.2002), 11-12.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 10.

Technique

The “Largo al factotum” bassoon excerpt spans two octaves between G2 and G4 within the key of C major. While not an excerpt within a tricky key signature or extremes of range, the speed, pacing, and facility of the excerpt is what can make this excerpt a challenge.

Once notes, arpeggio patterns, and rhythmic patterns are learned, then comes speed development. While Rossini writes “allegro vivace” as the *tempo* marking, this *tempo* direction can have a variety of metronome rates. The *tempo* most likely will be determined by conductor and baritone preferences. As a bassoonist in the orchestra, it is suggested to be able to play this excerpt within a range of *tempi*, an example range might be dotted quarter note between 134-154. The use of the up10/down5 metronome practice exercise will aid in speed development and retention.

To also help with speed, finger technique and fingering selections can also assist. Fingers should stay as close to the body of the bassoon as possible. Fingers can move more quickly when kept close to the tone holes and keys, which reduces the travel distance when changing fingerings. When speed is a chief concern, working efficiently and economically will only prove helpful regardless of which finger selections bassoonists decide upon. In bars 5-6 after rehearsal 31, use of full E4 on the grace note can help the note to be clearly heard, while use of short C# on the second sixteenth note, and trill E4 without the Bb key on the fourth sixteenth note can help with fingering movement economy. Bassoonists should feel free to use whichever fingering allows one to get through the passage cleanly and on time.

As this is primarily an articulated passage, tongue articulation and weight, and the amount of reed within the embouchure are some elements of which to be mindful. (Working in tandem with articulation is also the reed and embouchure, which will be discussed in the Sound Production below.) The articulations should be light. This means that the amount of tongue surface area that comes into contact with the reed should be minimal, just enough to separate the flow of air to provide clarity at the front and end of each note. Depending on the *tempo*, some bassoonists might opt to perform this passage by double

tonguing. If using double tonguing technique, a lightness is still required for the front and back syllables. The physics of a reed make it easier to articulate faster and play light when there is less reed in the mouth, “getting off the wires.” Having less reed in the embouchure can prove extremely helpful in the bass clef passage, bars 17-27 after rehearsal 31.

Sound Production

As mentioned above, the reed and embouchure can prove to be invaluable resources for facility of the passage. Every bassoonist will have their individual preferences and opinions regarding reed lightness and brightness, and embouchure shape. Regardless of these differences, a full, rounded, and good core sound perfectly in time needs to be the end result. The reed creation/choice, embouchure setup, and vowel voicing selection should be ones that allow for flexibility between two distinct registers: rehearsal 31 through bar 16, and bars 17-27 after rehearsal 31.

While articulation action is important, the air stream flow might be even more important to help bassoonists keep up and provide support to not fatigue the embouchure and tongue. “Articulation on the air” and “tongue to your fingers” are helpful techniques within a fast articulated passage such as this. Keeping air flowing, and the tongue articulations floating on the stream will allow the articulations not to be forced and result in a lighter articulation with less energy expelled.

Musical Gesture and Pacing

While the excerpt is in 6/8, at such a quick *tempo* the passage can be felt in one. Thinking in one, the measure downbeats are anchor points for trajectory and direction. The grouping suggestions provided below advise on air stream direction to keep the arpeggiated passage flowing forward to avoid becoming vertical and static.

In bars 1-2 and 5-6 of rehearsal 31, the sixteenth note gestures are ornaments highlighting the first note. While they should be executed perfectly in time and evenly spaced, they should be thought about as

gestures rather than individualized events; the air stream direction should be felt though the grace notes to lead into the principal note. In the arpeggiated passages (bars 3-4, 7-8, 11-12, and 15-6), should be thought of as hair pin gestures within the note groups. Within the arpeggio sonic landscape, the third and sixth eighth notes should not pop out of the texture. These notes are the highest registerally within the respective bars, and acoustically they will have a tendency to sound louder than the other notes.

Beginning at bar 17 after rehearsal 31, begins a four-bar crescendo. These four bars can be thought of as terraced dynamics to help regulate how quickly to crescendo between *piano* and *fortissimo*.

31 Allegro vivace

The musical score for the bassoon I part, rehearsal 31 for 27 bars, is presented in five staves. The first three staves are for the right hand, and the last two are for the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings and hairpin gestures indicating crescendos and decrescendos.

Staff 1 (Right Hand): *pp* (piano) with hairpin gestures indicating a crescendo and decrescendo.

Staff 2 (Right Hand): Continuation of the melodic line with hairpin gestures.

Staff 3 (Right Hand): Continuation of the melodic line with hairpin gestures.

Staff 4 (Left Hand): *(pp) cresc.* (piano) with hairpin gestures indicating a crescendo, leading to *(p)* (piano), *(mf)* (mezzo-forte), *(f)* (forte), and *ff* (fortissimo).

Staff 5 (Left Hand): Continuation of the melodic line with hairpin gestures, ending with *ff* (fortissimo).

Example 6.2: Musical Map, Gioachino Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, bassoon I part, reh 31 for 27 bars

Suggested Listening & Viewing

- Rossini, Gioachino. *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. London Symphony Orchestra and Ambrosian Opera Chorus, Claudio Abbado. With Teresa Berganza, Luigi Alva, Enzo Dara, Paolo Montarsolo, Hermann Prey. Recorded September 1971, Watford Town Hall, London. Deutsche Grammophon 415 695-2, 1986, compact discs.
- . *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Madrid Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Gianluigi Gelmetti. With Sagi, Emilio, Ángel Luis Ramírez, Juan Diego Flórez, Bruno Praticò, María Bayo, Pietro Spagnoli, Ruggero Raimondi. Recorded 2005, Teatro Real Madrid, Spain. Released 2005. Opus Arte, 167 min.
- . *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. The Metropolitan Opera, Maurizio Benini. Performed March 24, 2007. The MET Opera on Demand, Recorded Broadcast, 2007. Video Stream, 165 min.
- . *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, Riccardo Chailly. With Marilyn Horne, Paolo Barbacini, Leo Nucci, Samuel Ramey, Enzo Dara. Recorded 1981. Germany: CBS Masterworks D3 37862, 1982, LP sound discs.

Additional notable excerpts from *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

1. Sinfonia, complete.

Chapter 7: L'ELISIR D'AMORE

L'elisir d'amore (1832)

Music: Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848)

Libretto: Felice Romani (1788-1865)¹

Based on "Le Philtre" libretto by Eugène Scribe

Melodramma giocoso in Italian in 2 Acts

Premiered: Teatro della Canobbiana, Milan (May 12, 1832)²

Opera Synopsis

A romantic comedy set in an Italian village: the peasant Nemorino is in love with the wealthy landowner Adina, who does not give him the time of day. Overhearing Adina reading aloud the story of Tristan and Isolde, and how the pair fall in love after drinking a love potion, Nemorino believes he needs a love potion to help him win over Adina. A group of soldiers march into the village led by Sergeant Belcore. Belcore immediately proposes marriage to Adina, who is able to ward off his advances.³ The quack doctor, Dulcamara, arrives in the village advertising his miraculous cure-all elixir.⁴ All of the villagers race to purchase Dulcamara's elixir; Nemorino waits for the crowd to disperse and asks Dulcamara if he sells a love potion.⁵ The quack doctor sells Nemorino a "love" elixir (really a cheap Bordeaux) and assures Dulcamara that it will work within 24 hours.⁶ Emboldened from the placebo elixir, Nemorino acts aloof and indifferent towards Adina, who angered by Nemorino's new attitude decides to punish him by agreeing to marry the flirtatious Sergeant Belcore.⁷

¹ Alessandro Roccatagliati, "Romani, (Giuseppe) Felice," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed May 27, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Mary Ann Smart and Julian Budden, "Donizetti, (Domenico) Gaetano," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed May 27, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³ Nico Castel, trans., "L'elisir d'amore," in *Italian Belcanto Opera Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2000-c.2002), 217.

⁴ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "The Elixir of Love," in *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 207.

⁵ Nico Castel, trans., "L'elisir d'amore," in *Italian Belcanto Opera Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2000-c.2002), 217.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 217.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 217.

Fearing that he is running out of time to win Adina's love, and having no more money, Nemorino joins the army to use the enlistment bonus to purchase another bottle of love elixir from Dulcamara.⁸ Upon drinking (and becoming drunk) from the second dose of "elixir," Nemorino is swarmed by the village women, who are interested in Nemorino because he has inherited his recently departed uncle's large fortune, news which Nemorino has not learned of yet. Overseeing the scene of Nemorino with the townswomen, Adina is jealous and sad, and Dulcamara is shocked that the elixir is working. Dulcamara tells Adina that it was Nemorino's love for her that made him decide to enlist. Realizing that she does in fact love Nemorino, Adina buys back his enlistment papers. Seeing Nemorino and Adina now reconciled, Belcore exclaims that there are plenty of women in the world and Dulcamara brags to the villagers what his elixir can do.⁹

Act II, No. 11 Romanza: beginning to reh 67 ("Una furtiva lagrima")

Scene Information

During the evening, rumors spread between the female villagers that Nemorino's uncle has died leaving him a large fortune. Drunk from a second dose of the "elixir" purchased from Dulcamara with his enlistment bonus, Nemorino is swarmed by women of the village who have learned of his inheritance.¹⁰ Not having heard the news of his uncle, Nemorino believes his popularity is because the elixir is working. Coming upon the scene, Adina is shocked to see Nemorino flirting and Dulcamara is shocked to see the "elixir" is actually working. Ignoring Adina, Nemorino continues to flirt with the other women. Adina is hurt by Nemorino's indifference and leaves realizing that she does love him.¹¹ Nemorino sees her

⁸ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "The Elixir of Love," *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 207.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁰ Nico Castel, trans., "L'elisir d'amore," in *Italian Belcanto Opera Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2000-c.2002), 217.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 217.

unhappiness and realizes that Adina does care for him. Nemorino sings of his joy at learning of Adina's love for him in the Romanza introduced by the bassoon solo.

LARGHETTO

FAGOTTO 1.^o

FAGOTTO 2.^o

p Solo

cres. calando

67

Example 7.1: Gaetano Donizetti, L’elisir d’amore, bassoon I part, beginning to reh 67 (“Una furtiva lagrima”)

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

The opening bassoon solo of “Una furtiva lagrima” begins arguably one of the most famous tenor *arias* of opera literature. The *aria*, intended to musically depict Nemorino’s joy in learning that Adina does love and care for him, ironically begins in a minor key, which is a scale mode often used to depict sadness or turmoil. While the *aria* begins in B-flat minor, a key which has become synonymous with darkness or tragedy, the *aria* concludes in B-flat major, a mode common with happiness. At this point in the opera, a turning point has been reached with the two lovers as their emotions and feelings are realized. The mode change within “Una furtiva lagrima” depicts this story plot arc: starting with the sadness of unrequited love and the pain that Nemorino sees in Adina (B-flat minor) and moving into emotional realization and resolve of love (E major).

“Una furtiva lagrima” is labelled a *romanza*. The bassoon solo should embody *romanza* qualities, “strophic form, unadorned melody [with] subordinate accompaniment and simple expression,”¹² those of which encapsulate Nemorino’s character, a plain man of simple means. While not an exact repeat of each other, the bassoon solo and Nemorino’s entrances are similar having the same first 4 bars. Nemorino’s first line of libretto describes the tears he sees Adina trying to hide, “a furtive tear appeared in her eyes.”¹³ The down slurs in bars 2 and 4 are musical representations of falling tears in both the bassoon and tenor solos.

Libretto¹⁴

NEMORINO

Una furtiva lagrima negli occhi suoi spuntò...

A furtive tear in the eyes her appeared...

(A furtive tear appeared in her eyes...)

Quelle festos giovani invidiar sembrò...

Those happy girls to envy she seemed

Che più cercando io vo’!

What more looking for I can

(What more can I look for!)

(What more do I want!)

M’ama, lo vedo.

She loves me, I see it.

Un solo istante i palpiti del suo bel cor sentir!...

One sole moment the beating of her dear heart to feel!...

I miei sospir confondere per poco a’ suoi sospir!

My sighs to blend for a little while with her sighs!

Cielo, si può morir; di più non chiedo.

Heaven! One could die; more I do not ask.

¹² Jack Sage, Susana Friedmann, and Roger Hickman, “Romance,” ed. Deane Root, accessed June 9, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹³ Nico Castel, trans., “L’elisir d’amore,” in *Italian Belcanto Opera Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2000-c.2002), 333.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 333.

Technique

While this bassoon passage is not a technical excerpt, there are a few technical considerations worth discussing. For notes with several fingering options, a decision of which fingering selection is best should be made as to benefit technical facility and fit within the sonic texture so as to not pop out of the sonic landscape. This could refer to notes that are either brighter, louder, muted, or duller than the other notes surrounding it. Examples of these notes are Db4, Gb4, and Ab4. As each day and reed could be a factor of which fingering is more appropriate within context, the passage should be practiced with multiple fingering options, respective to each bassoonist preferred fingerings. Practicing different fingering options allows a developing bassoonist to exercise the embouchure, voicings, and pitch adjustments necessary for each fingering necessary to remain in sonic texture of the surrounding notes.

One other technical element to mention is execution of the double grace notes in bars 6-7. In order to gauge speed of the double grace notes, these notes should “fill in the sound between the two main eighths.”¹⁵ One way to achieve this, is to “sing-it-how-you-would-play-it.” Singing the passage gives an opportunity to step away from the bassoon and to engage with vocal qualities of the line, as well as to embrace and get a sense of musical line and direction. As each bassoonist creates their own musical interpretation, they will need to determine if the grace notes be going somewhere or coming from somewhere.

Sound Production

The bassoon vocal-like line is within a resistant part of the register, ranging between A3-Ab4. This range can pose difficulty in producing clean attacks and sounding precisely on time. As the bassoon solo is accompanied by constant sixteenth note arpeggios in the harp obbligato, it is paramount that the bassoon sound metrically in time on the downbeat of bar 2. In many recordings, the bassoon sound is

¹⁵ “The Orchestral Bassoon,” Brett Van Gansbeke, accessed June 10, 2020, www.orchestralbassoon.com.

often heard slightly behind the downbeat. In order to ensure a perfectly timed entrance, bassoonists should establish a BSG plan in the bar before the bassoon solo entrance. When inhaling in the slow *larghetto tempo* before the first entrance, breathing on beat 4 should provide enough time to inhale and set the embouchure without engaging glottis or throat tension. On the inhale, the breath and back of tongue should remain low to avoid tension and narrowing of the throat as well as high and tense shoulders causing the resultant sound to be pinched and thin.

It is important to engage an active, spinning airstream with support from core and obliques, while maintaining relaxed posture and shoulders. Using an engaged airstream with relaxed, open throat will support a soft cushioned embouchure allowing for ease and flexibility to move within the range of the solo excerpt. Along with airstream and core support, the use of vowel voicings can help color, pitch, and range facility. Specifically, the vowels EE and OH can help with the down slurs in bars 2 and 4, as well as the down leaps in bar 8 between F4-A3/Bb3.

The arpeggiating harp and *pizzicato* strings provide a solid harmonic foundation for intonation and musical phrasing. In the practice room, a good beginning exercise is to play the complete excerpt against a Bb drone. Doing this will allow a pitch center reference and to help demonstrate moments of tension and release for phrasing and interpretation. Another drone exercise is to drone the respective pitch center for each chordal change in the harp: Bbm – F4/3 – A dim7 – Bbm – Ab6/5 – DbM – Cm6 – F7 – Bbm.

Interpretation: Musical Gesture, Harmonic Relationship & Pacing

As previously mention, this excerpt should represent *romanza* qualities within a style and aesthetic that fits the Nemorino character. At the same time, it needs to have musical trajectory, phrasing, and nuance so it grabs the audience's attention alluding to the emotive tenor line that it introduces. The excerpt can be thought of as one large melodic arc with miniature components underneath. The bassoon excerpt is comprised of two 2-bar phrases and one 4-bar phrase (2+2+4). The two 2-bar phrases (bars 2-3

and bars 4-5), share the same rhythm and melodic contour. To develop the two 2-bar phrases, the second entrance on Gb should be a bit more intense than the first entrance on F to show line development.

Engaging different types of *vibratos* on the F and the Gb can assist with this: the *vibrato* on the F entrance can be sweet and calm, where the Gb entrance can be a bit more active and passionate.

The repeated notes in bars 3 and 5 need to be cleanly and clearly articulated going to the downbeat of following bar which allows for a rounded, subtle taper on the held note on the second eighth note of each bar respectively. The gesture of going towards the down beats in bars 3 and 5 is similar to how a tenor might say the word “lagrima,” with emphasis on the LA syllable and relaxing on the GRI-MA. In attempts to be gentle, and while playing in this resistant register, bassoonists might use an articulation that is so light that the start of each note is not clear, which can result in a perceived long note rather than 4 clear different notes within the lead gesture.

This excerpt is tonal with a simple harmonic progression. The harmony underneath the bassoon line provides a foundation to allow the bassoon to lean into moments of dissonance and tension. Provided in the musical map below is a simple chordal harmonic analysis with dissonant notes highlighted in blue. In bars 2-4, the dissonant downbeats should not be avoided but rather receive agogic weight to stress the harmonic tension.

Bassoonists have differing opinions as to where is the apex of the excerpt: either the Ab4 in bar 6 or the F4 downbeat in bar 7. While the Ab4 is the highest note of the excerpt and includes an accent, Donizetti directs to begin a *crescendo* on the accented Ab4 and sonically put us in the dominant of III. This might allow one to conclude that the F4 in bar 7 is the intended apex arriving in D-flat major (III). Both apex options are in the major mode but on key areas with different harmonic function; starting and continuing the crescendo through the C major allows for a moment of arrival and resolve on D-flat as the line returns to the home key of Bb minor.

As soon as the F4 apex is reached in bar 7, Donizetti directs the passage to *calando*. The rate of *calando*, especially in reduction of *tempo*, can vary from bassoonist to bassoonist and from performance

to performance. The three eighth notes in bars 8-9 are not landing points, but instead should have a rounded finish with slight taper round, and the sixteenth notes in bar 8 are sighing gestures.

The study and performance of this excerpt provides opportunities to explore different musical and dynamic plans especially in terms of varying rates of *diminuendo* and *ritardando*.

Bb minor:

i V₃⁴ vii^{o7} i

V₃⁶/III III ii⁶ V₃⁶ V⁷ i

Example 7.2: Musical Map, Gaetano Donizetti, *L'elisir d'amore*, bassoon I part, beginning to reh 67 ("Una furtiva lagrima")

Suggested Listening & Viewing

Caruso, Enrico. *The Complete Recordings of Enrico Caruso, Vol. 6*. With the Victor Orchestra. Recorded Nov. 1911 – Jan. 1912, Camden, New Jersey and New York. Naxos Historical, 2001, On Demand Audio Stream.

Donizetti, Gaetano. *L'elisir d'amore*. The Metropolitan Opera, Domingo Hindoyan. Performed February 10, 2018, Recorded Broadcast, 2018. Video Stream, 142 min.

———. *L'elisir d'amore*. The Metropolitan Opera, James Levine. With Felice Romani, Kathleen Battle, Dawn Upshaw, Luciano Pavarotti, Enzo Dara, Leo Nucci. Recorded May and September 1989, New York Manhattan Center. Deutsche Grammophon 429 744-2, 1990, compact discs.

———. *L'elisir d'amore*. Orchestra and Chorus of the Opera House Rome, Gabriele Santini. With Margherita Carosio, Loretta di Lelio, Nicola Monti, Tito Gobbi, Melchiorre Luise. RCA Victor LM 6024, 1954.

———. *L'elisir d'amore*. Orchestra and Chorus of the Royal Opera House, John Pritchard.
With Ileana Cotrubas, Lillian Watson, Plácido Domingo, Geraint Evans, Ingvar Wixell. Columbia
masterworks, 1977, LP sound discs.

Additional notable excerpts from *L'elisir d'amore*

1. The other entrances of No. 11 Romanza

Chapter 8: AïDA

Aïda (1871)

Music: Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Libretto: Giuseppe Ghislanzoni (1824-1893)

Based on a scenario by French Egyptologist August Mariette and a prose libretto of Camille du Locle (1832-1903), a French theater director and librettist¹

Grand Opera in Italian in 4 Acts

Premiered: Cairo Opera (December 24, 1871)²

Opera Synopsis

Set in the time of the Pharaohs: The High Priest Ramfis tells Radamès, a young Egyptian warrior, that the King of Egypt plans to appoint a leader to lead an army against Amonasro, King of Ethiopia. Radamès wants the commander position believing if he returns victorious, then he can free and marry Aïda, the Ethiopian slave he secretly loves. Aïda's Egyptian captors do not know that she is actually the daughter of their rival, Amonasro.³ Princess Amneris, daughter of the King of Egypt, is in love with Radamès and is jealous of his longing for Aïda. With the news of an Ethiopian invasion, Radamès is named commander of the Egyptian army; Aïda is torn between her love for Radamès, and her father and homeland.⁴

Egypt has won in battle against the Ethiopians, and Amneris awaits Radamès's return. Amneris tricks Aïda into admitting her true feelings for Radamès; Amneris swears to ruin Aïda.⁵ Radamès and the Egyptian army return with Ethiopian prisoners. Unbeknown to all except Aïda, one of the Ethiopian prisoners is Amonasro who has disguised himself as a simple warrior.⁶ As a victor's reward, the Egyptian

¹ Steven Huebner, "Du Locle, Camille," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed October 3, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Roger Parker, "Verdi, Giuseppe," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed October 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³ Nico Castel, trans., "Aïda," in *The Complete Verdi Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c1994-1996). 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "Aïda," in *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 57.

⁶ Nico Castel, trans., "Aïda," in *The Complete Verdi Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c1994-1996). 3.

King gives Radamès his daughter's hand in marriage.⁷ Still in love with Aïda, and believing Amonasro is dead, Radamès asks for the Ethiopian slaves to be freed.

On the eve of Amneris's wedding, Ramfis and Amneris go to a temple to pray. Aïda waits to meet Radamès, however Amonasro appears instead and orders his daughter to find out military route details from Radamès so that the Ethiopian army can plan an ambush.⁸ Amonasro hides in the bushes as Radamès arrives and professes his love for Aïda. As Aïda obtains the Egyptian military route plan from Radamès, Amonasro appears and reveals his true identity; Amonasro and Aïda flee. Ashamed of the treason committed, Radamès surrenders to the priests.

Still in love with Radamès, Amneris, offers to save him from execution if he forsakes Aïda; Radamès refuses to renounce his love for the Ethiopian slave.⁹ Radames is sentenced by the priests to be buried alive in a crypt; Amneris curses the priests for their cruelty.¹⁰ Unable to live without Radamès, Aïda has hidden herself in the crypt to be with him; together Aïda and Radames die embracing one another.

Act III, No. 6: reh N to reh O ("Padre, a costoro schiava non sono")

Scene Information

Aïda awaits Radamès's arrival. As Aïda laments never being able to see her Ethiopian homeland again, her father Amonasro appears. Amonasro reminds Aïda about her country and her sense of duty while describing how the Egyptians have destroyed their temples and homes and have enslaved and murdered their countrymen and women. Aïda is torn between the love for her country and her love for

⁷ Ibid., 3.

⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁹ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "Aïda," in *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 57.

¹⁰ Nico Castel, trans., "Aïda," in *The Complete Verdi Libretti*, Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c1994-1996). 4.

Radamès. Amonasro informs Aïda that the Ethiopians are prepared for battle but to be victorious, he needs inside information about which route the Egyptians will take. Amonasro tells Aïda she can learn this from Radamès: Radamès is the leader of the Egyptian forces, and because of his love for Aïda, he will tell her the route. Aïda is shocked that Amonasro would ask her to betray Radamès. Imagining what will happen if he does not learn this information, Amonasro describes to Aïda an Egyptian attack on Ethiopia: the Egyptians will burn the cities spreading terror and death. Aïda pleads with Amonasro; Amonasro says the country will blame her for all the bloodshed and destruction, and that Aïda's mother will curse her. Amonasro insults Aïda telling her that she is the pharaoh's slave, and not his daughter. Pleading for pity, we have arrived at bassoon excerpt within the scene where Aïda makes the fateful decision to betray Radamès.

N $\text{♩} = 78$
AND.^{te} assai SOST.^{to}.

Vater Er- - bormen **1** *ppp con espressione*
 - tà pie - - tà

The musical score is written for bassoon I-II. It begins with a tempo marking of *AND.^{te} assai SOST.^{to}.* and a metronome marking of $\text{♩} = 78$. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score is divided into five systems, each with two staves. The first system includes the lyrics "Vater Er- - bormen" and "- tà pie - - tà". A first ending bracket is placed over the first measure of the first system. The second system has a first ending bracket. The third system has a first ending bracket. The fourth system has a first ending bracket. The fifth system has a first ending bracket and a final measure marked with a circled "1".

Example 8.1: Giuseppe Verdi, *Aida*, bassoon I-II part, Act III, No. 6, reh N to reh O

Libretto¹¹

AÏDA

Padre!... a costoro... schiava... non sono

Father... to them... a slave... I am not...

Non maledirmi... non imprecarmi...

Do not curse me... do not revile me...

ancor tua figlia potrai chiamarmi

still your daughter you will be able to call me...

(You will still be able to call me your daughter)

della mia patria degna sarò.

of my country worthy I shall be.

AMONASRO

Pensa che un popolo vinto, straziato

Think that a people defeated, tormented

per te soltanto risorger può...

through you alone rise again can...

AÏDA

Oh patria! oh patria... quanto mi costi!

Oh homeland! Oh homeland... how much you cost me!

AMONASRO

Coraggio! ei giunge... là tutto udrò...

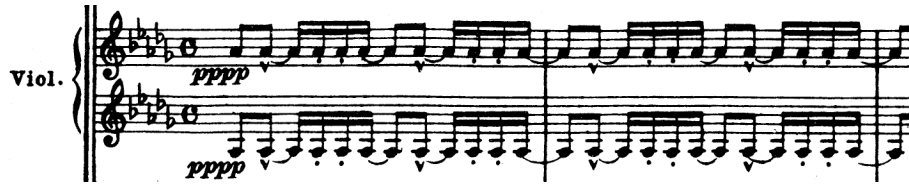
Courage! he's coming... there everything I will hear...

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

Aïda is torn between her two loves: the love she has for the Egyptian Radamès and the love she has for her homeland, Ethiopia. She must decide where her loyalty lies; musically this tension is represented in the *ostinato* by the syncopated violins heard throughout the entire excerpt.

¹¹ Ibid., 45-46.



Example 8.2: Giuseppe Verdi, *Aïda*, full score, Act III, No. 6 bars 1-2

Beginning in Ab-flat minor, in bar 2 atop of the violin *ostinato*, the bassoon line is in unison with the violas and cellos. Within the first opening measures (bars 2-3 and 6) of the bassoon passage, the downward line evokes a repeated sighing gesture which sets up the emotive passage before Aïda's syllabic entrance in bar 5. Aïda pleads with her father Amonasro, "Father.... to them... a slave... I am not...; Do not curse me... do not revile me..."¹² This syllabic libretto along with the lyrical bassoon and string passage adds another level of emotion to the tension and friction musically depicting what Aïda is trying to resolve. As Aïda comes to her decision to aid her father, Aïda becomes more lyrical. Now singing in unison with the expressive line heard in the bassoon, violas, and cellos (bar 10), she tells Amonasro, "You will still be able to call me your daughter...; of my country worthy I shall be."¹³ Musically, Aïda has given in to her father's pressure, musically represented by Aïda joining in the lyrical quality in which Amonasro is represented by in this passage. Amonasro's line beginning in bar 17 now rooted in D-flat major, is lyrical and flowing, and doubled in unison by the bassoon, violas, and cellos.

The bassoon line must encapsulate both characters, Aïda and Amonasro, and be aware of which character the bassoon is paired. Having an understanding of where each character is emotionally and perhaps even psychologically, can aid the understanding of context within the different areas of the excerpt.

¹² Ibid., 45-46.

¹³ Ibid., 45-46.

Technique

The key signature and numerous accidentals are what make this bassoon passage technically challenging. The bassoon first enters in unison with violas and cellos; this entrance and the following passage need to be smooth and unobtrusive underneath Aïda's line, through bar 16. What this means for bassoonists is that each note needs to be covered sound with a blended, consistent color and a true *legato* to stay within the sonic texture. Control over each note can be achieved with the fingering selected and how the sound is produced with embouchure and airstream.

There are a few fingerings to consider incorporating when executing this excerpt to assist technical issues. Front/pinky Gb3 is a preferred fingering for this excerpt. Front/pinky Gb3 tends to be lower in pitch than back/thumb Gb3. Also, as Gb3 tends to be a bright, sometimes brittle note, especially when in the context of *ppp* dynamic as seen in the opening bassoon entrance, bassoonists might consider a muted Gb3 fingering. A muted fingering here can aid in blend with the violas and cellos, as well as reduce stress of a soft, clean attack on such a troubling note. Another muted fingering to consider is the RH1/3 forked fingering of Fb4 in bar 4. Using a muted fingering for Fb4 helps to keep with note within the sonic texture when resolving to Eb4, which is often a duller note.

For the many Db4s throughout the except, both short and long fingering can be used depending on location within the texture and context of the passage. For example, bars 2-9, should use a short Db4 fingering. However, once arriving at bars 11 and 13 when the Db4 occurs on the downbeat and at the peak of a hairpin, a full Db4 fingering should be used. Once arriving at Amonasro's entrance at bar 17, the texture is a bit thicker with the addition of flutes, oboes, clarinet, horn, and more double bass. A full Db4 fingering from here to the end of the passage in bar 27 should be used. Regardless of which fingering selections a bassoonist decides to use for this passage, the ultimate result needs to be a round, lush, smooth, and sonically cohesive bassoon line.

There is one awkward interval that is worth noting for technical drills: Eb3 to Gb3 in bars 2 and 6. This interval goes right over the break between a forked fingering (Eb3) and a half-hole fingering (Gb3). Another reason to use front/pinky Gb3 is to simplify and not overextend RH thumb when making

the leap between Eb3 (with Bb key) and Gb3. When drilling this interval, it is important to remain relaxed especially when making the leap over the break: keep fingers nimble and in control, focusing on the timing of when each digit moves to the tone holes, choose a half hole that is appropriate to not allow the Gb3 to crack, and use a focused air stream and vowel pairing to help make this interval happen.

Sound Production

Now having discussed a few fingering considerations to help the sonic landscape, there are a few suggestions of sound production to facilitate the passage and sound. First and foremost, within the *andante sostenuto tempo*, airstream and core support is vital, along with vowel usage in support of pitch and tone color. This is challenging as many of the notes Verdi writes within the noted key signature are categorized commonly as bright or dull, and many of the problem intervals go across the break.

In addition to keeping the air spinning, and core and obliques engaged, in this particular excerpt it is especially important that each note moves in a very controlled *legato* from one note to the next. Using the English translation of *legato*, the end of each note should be “bound” to the beginning of the next. This connection is characterized without bumps or without ebbing during the in-between of each note change. This means that there should not be a decay of sound as you change to the next note; the airstream and sound trajectory are “bound” as you move from one note to the next.

In regard to vowel usage, either as a mechanism for execution of the passage technically or for intonation, each bassoonist should create a plan to do what works and what sounds the best individually. There is no absolute right way or wrong way to approach vowel usage of a particular note. In general, the OH vowel helps to lower and open a sound; an AY vowel helps to brighten and elevate pitch and color, and an EE vowel narrows and thins the sound. Vowel changes are helpful with the large up and down slurs within this excerpt, for example bars 7 and 8. In bar 7, the leap of a major sixth can be executed by transitioning from an OH vowel on the Fb3 to an AY vowel on the Db4; as this line is also *crescendo*-ing, the air stream should spin and slightly increase to help make the upward leap. In bar 8 for the down slur

of another major sixth can be executed by transitioning from OH vowel on the Eb4 to an AY or EE vowel on the Gb3. This down slur is rather tricky to not let the Gb3 pop out of sonic texture in the *diminuendo*, and to not crack. To help with this, the airstream should be slightly lifted at the end of the Eb4 just before moving and voicing down to the Gb3, this way there is placement and control over the sounding of the Gb3.

Another technique to change color and brightness is through the amount of lip surface area on the reed and slight pressurizing of the reed. The more lip surface area placed on the reed can dampen vibrations which will subdue, darken the tone quality of a bright note. This can be done by flattening the lips or focusing the lips/embouchure to the reed center for more lip flesh contact with the reed. A slight pressurizing of the reed is recommended, to more advanced bassoonists, through a torque (or twist) of head. A torque of the head can be down on the either the x-axis, y-axis, or a combination of both to change pressure on the blades of the reeds.

At the top of the excerpt, Verdi instructs that the passage be played in *ppp con espressione* and opens the passage on a Gb3. A notorious challenging note to begin a passage, especially at such a soft dynamic in a delicate passage, there are a few suggestions which can help quell anxiety and increase comfort on the opening Gb3 of the passage. As mentioned above, a muted fingering is one option available to bassoonists. Another is to establish a process cue of making the attack. This comes hand-in-hand with the BSG plan and ensuring the throat does not close or restrict at the point of inhalation.

Bassoonists should be sensitive with the direction of *ppp con espressione* especially when playing unison with strings, namely the violas and cellos for this specific excerpt. For this particular excerpt, the bassoon color should blend and match timbre while adding its own low woodwind color to the group string sound. With the necessity to blend to the strings, *con espressione* does not refer to a soloistic *vibrato*. The use of soloistic *vibrato* will call too much attention to the bassoon line. Instead, *the con espressione* refers to a group (viola, cello, and bassoon) expressiveness. In this passage, the bassoon should be a contributing member of a cohesive string/bassoon sound, rather than two separate sections playing together.

Musical Gesture and Pacing

Verdi is quite generous with dynamic and gesture notation directions. A good place to start is to do what Verdi writes: soft dynamic, and *crescendo* and *diminuendo* hairpins. Also, this excerpt is one which can be played using the contour of the line. This means to gesture up with the phrase rises in register, and to gesture down / decrease dynamic when the line goes down in register. This gesture helps evoke the opening sighing motion first mentioned above in bars 2-3 and 6.

As already discussed above, in the context of this excerpt, the term *con espressione* should be taken as an ensemble “very impassioned,” rather than soloistic. As the bassoon needs to blend with the middle strings, it is important to use a *vibrato* which is subtle and gives life but does not detract from the ensemble blend or call attention to the bassoon as a solo line. As also discussed, *legato* notes and sound should be thought about as bound, which comes from air support between the notes when moving from one to the next. While the passage needs to be smooth and without bumps, it still needs to have trajectory, line, and phrasing. One way to add direction is to go towards the repeated notes, as Verdi writes a *crescendo* to the apex of subphrases as seen in bars 5, 8, 9, 15, 16, 20, 22, and 23.

This excerpt is in essence chamber music, there are only three or four separate lines going at one time. Bassoonists should be cognizant of what each character (Aïda, Amonasro) is saying and emoting as well as their pacing. At the end of Aïda’s line in bar 16, it is quite common that the soprano will slow down slightly and perhaps take a breath within the measure. When the line is passed on to Amonasro in bar 17, the *tempo* floats in a forward direction within the major key area. In personal practice experiment with different rates of slowing down, place the soprano breaths at different points in the measure, and an *atempo* to bar 17; when in a performance setting, it will be important to connect with the conductor during this vocal line handoff.

Andante assai sostenuto

ppp con espressione

Aida

Drone
Suggestions: Ab ----- cont'd.

7

12

16

Amonasro

pp

21

C F Eb Ab Bb Gb Db Eb Fb Gb

Example 8.3: Musical Map, Giuseppe Verdi, *Aïda*, bassoon I part, Act III, No. 6, reh N to reh O

Suggested Listening & Viewing

Verdi, Giuseppe. *Aïda*. The Metropolitan Opera, Nicola Luisotti. Performed October 6, 2018. The MET Opera on Demand, Recorded Broadcast, 2018. Video Stream, 172 min.

———. *Aïda*. Robert Wilson, director. Kazushi Ono, conductor. Recorded at Theatre Royal de la Mannaie (Brussels, Belgium). Opus Arte, 2006. Alexander Street on Demand Online, 159 min.

———. *Aïda*. Royal Opera Chorus, New Philharmonia Orchestra, Riccardo Mutti. With Montserrat Caballé, Fiorenza Cossotto, Plácido Domingo, Nicola Martinucci, Piero Cappuccilli, Nicolai Ghiaurov, Luigi Roni. EMI Classics 5099964064451, 20--?.

———. *Aïda*. Teatro Alla Scala, Lorin Maazel. With Luciano Pavarotti, Maria Chiara. Recorded 1985, La Scala, Milan. ArtHaus Musik, 1988. Alexander Street on Demand Online, 154 min.

Additional notable excerpts from *Aïda*

1. Act I “Celeste Aïda”
2. Act II, No. 4: reh K for 24 bars

Chapter 9: CARMEN

Carmen (1873-1874)

Music: Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

Libretto: Henri Meilhac (1831-1897) and Ludovic Halévy (1834-1908)

Based on Prosper Mérimée's novel *Carmen* published in *Revue des deux mondes* (1845)

Opéra comique in French in 4 acts

Premiered in Paris, Opéra Comique (March 1875)

Opera Synopsis

Dragoons people-watch in the plaza while the officer Moralès flirts with Micaëla who is searching for the corporal Don José. The relief guard enters the scene with Don José among them; ladies from the nearby cigarette factory take their mid-day break outdoors.¹ The gypsy factory-girl Carmen appears and is quickly surrounded by male admirers but is shown no interest from Don José.² Micaëla gives Don José a message; Don José vows to marry Micaëla. A fight breaks out within the factory between Carmen and another factory-worker; Captain Zuniga orders Don José to arrest Carmen.³ Now in the prison, Carmen promises to later meet up with him at the tavern Lillas Pastia if he lets her escape; Don José allows Carmen to get away and he instead is sent to prison.⁴

At Lillas Pastia, Carmen and other gypsies flirt with dragoons including Zuniga; the bullfighter Escamillo arrives at the tavern and quickly becomes enamored with Carmen.⁵ The dragoons leave the tavern; two smugglers try to convince Carmen to join them in a smuggling expedition; Carmen says she cannot join as she must wait for her love Don José.⁶ Don José arrives at Lillas Pastia where soon after the military bugle sounds a "return to camp."⁷ Carmen tells Don José that if he did love her he would join her

¹ Nico Castel, trans., "Carmen," in *French Opera Libretti* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, 1999), 69.

² Ibid., 69

³ Hugh Macdonald, "Carmen," *Grove Music Online*, accessed September 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁴ Nico Castel, trans., "Carmen," in *French Opera Libretti* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, 1999), 69.

⁵ Hugh Macdonald, "Carmen," *Grove Music Online*, accessed September 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Nico Castel, trans., "Carmen," in *French Opera Libretti* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, 1999), 70.

with the group of smugglers. Zuniga arrives and gets into a fight with Don José, leaving Don José with the only option to join Carmen and her gypsy companions.⁸

Now traveling with the smugglers and gypsies, Carmen has grown tired of Don José. The smugglers leave Don José to guard the camp; Micaëla arrives looking for Don José.⁹ Before being seen, Micaëla hides as Escamillo arrives looking for Carmen. Don José and Escamillo duel only to be stopped by Carmen and the return of the smugglers. Escamillo invites everyone to a bullfight; Micaëla convinces Don José to return home to see his ailing mother. Don José leaves telling Carmen that he will see her again.

Escamillo arrives at the bullfight with Carmen by his side and the two profess their love to one another. Don José confronts Carmen and begs her to take him back. Jealous, angry, and having been rejected by Carmen, Don José prevents Carmen from entering the arena. In a fatal fit of rage, Don José stabs Carmen.

Entr'acte between Act I and Act II: beginning to 8 bars after reh 1

Scene Information

At the end of Act I, Carmen has successfully seduced Don José and convinced him to help her to escape from jail, having promised to meet him at Lillas Pastia's tavern later.¹⁰ The Entr'acte *solí* played by two bassoons is prelude material to Act II, where the opening scene takes place two months after Carmen's escape in Lillas Pastia's tavern with Carmen and gypsy friends entertaining other officers.¹¹

⁸ Ibid., 70

⁹ Nicholas Martin, "Carmen," in *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 137.

¹⁰ Ibid., 137.

¹¹ Nico Castel, trans., "Carmen," in *French Opera Libretti* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, 1999), 70.



Example 9.1: Georges Bizet, *Carmen*, bassoon I part, Entr'acte, beginning to 8 bars after reh 1

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

The Entr'acte *sol*i bassoon passage is the same material as Don José's off-stage entrance into Act II, Sc. 16 ("Halte-là! Qui va là?"). In the quintet before Don José's Act II entrance, two smugglers and two other gypsies are trying to convince Carmen to join them to get rid of contraband.¹² Carmen says she cannot go because she is in love with Don José and is awaiting his arrival at Lillas Pastia's. Don José arrives just as the smugglers leave, singing the familiar bassoon tune.

Rhythm and *tempo* are two components that connect the bassoon *sol*i and the character of Don José. Borrowing on Don José's military background, the bassoon *sol*i is a march in a stately *tempo*, in 2/4 meter with eighth notes as the primary rhythmic subdivision. The excerpt is comprised of seven 4-bar phrases, reinforcing Don José's regimented, military background.

The excerpt's rhythm and *tempo* represent Don José's military background, while the dynamics help to support the Don José's internal and mixed emotions. Except for one *crescendo* in the parallel bassoon and Don José excerpts (bars 24-26), the dynamic structure between the bassoon *sol*i and Don

¹² Ibid., 70.

José's entrance are similar. As Don José heads towards Lillas Pastia's to meet Carmen, he is having a conversation with himself. The *forte* dynamic passages (bars 1-4, 9-16, 17-20) are exclaimed, outward commands and confirmations of strength about him as a corporal: "Halt! Who goes there? Dragoon of Alcalà!" and "I, I am going to make my rival bite the dust."¹³ While the alternate *piano* dynamic passages (bars 5-8, 21-24) between the confident statements is an inner dialogue that Don José is having, questioning himself regarding his relationship with Carmen: "Where are you going over there, dragoon of Alcalà?" and "A matter of honor, an affair of the heart."¹⁴ The final phrase of the excerpt (bars 24-28) is where the bassoon *solì* and Don José passages dynamically differ. After coming to grips with his inner struggle, Don José *crescendos* (bars 24-26), asserting his commitment to the military just as he arrives at the tavern to meet Carmen.

¹³ Nico Castel, trans., "Carmen," in *French Opera Libretti* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, 1999), 111-112.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 111-112.

Nº 16. Song **(Canzonetta.)**

Allegro moderato. ♩ = 100.

Violins I

Violins II

Violas

Frasquita.

Mercédès

Carmen

(Behind the scenes, far away.)

Don José

Hal-te-là ! Qui va là ? Dragon d'Al-ca-la ! — Où t'en vas- tu par là,

El Remendado

El Dancaïro

Cellos and Bases

c. Le voi-là !

7 J. Dra-gon — d'Alca- la ? — Moi, je m'en vais fai- re mordre la pous- siè- re

13 J. A mon ad- ver-sai- - - re. S'il en est ainsi passez mon a- mi. —

21 J. Af-fai-re d'honneur, Af- -fai-re de cœur ; Pour nous tout est là, — Dragons d'Al-ca- la !

legg. mo

p cre - scen - do

Example 9.2: Georges Bizet, Carmen, full score, from Act II, Sc. 16 (“Halte-là! Qui va là?”)

Don José's entrance from Act II, Sc. 16 ("Halte-là! Qui va là?")¹⁵

"Halte là! Qui va là? Dragon d'Alcalà!

"Halt! Who goes there? Dragoon of Alcalà!

Où t'en vas-tu par là, dragon d'Alcalà?

Where are you going over there, dragoon of Alcalà?

Moi, je m'en vais faire mordre la poussière à mon adversaire.

I, I am going to make my rival bite the dust.

S'il en est ainsi, passez, mon ami.

If it is like that, pass, my friend.

Affaire d'honneur, affaire de Coeur;

A matter of honor, an affair of the heart;

Pour nous tout est là, dragons, d'Alcalà!"

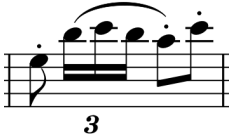


For us all is clear, dragoons of Alcalà!"


Technique

The total range of the excerpt spans slightly over an octave from F#3 to G4, using notes susceptible to cracking requiring the consideration of left-hand index finger half holes or engaging a speaker/vent key. Attention should be given to F#3 and G3 with regard to half hold size. Every bassoonist's setup including instrument, reed, and size of index finger pad is different, which necessitates a slightly different half hole size from person to person per respective note (think "Goldilocks"). In general, the F#3 half hole should be larger than the half hole for G3. If cracking presents on notes A3, Bb3, C4, or D4, consideration should be given to use the respective speaker key. The goal is for the start of every articulated note to be clean, free from cracking.

Besides half hole and speaker key notes, here are a few suggestions of fingering options.

¹⁵ Ibid., 111-112.

bar 7: 16 th note triplet		<p>If the 16th note triplet turn is not clean using full fingerings Eb4, try the trill fingering. Play regular D4 and wiggle RH3</p> <p>X X O O O X</p>
bar 13: F#3 and F#4		<p>For F#3, use front F# to assist with pitch.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">F#</p> <p>½ X X X X X W</p> <p>For F#4, use full F# to help the feeling of placement and arrive in the musical line go to bar 14.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eb</p> <p>X X* O X X O F</p> <p>*LH2 can be half holed if note cracks</p>
Bars 14-16: E4-F#4 trill plus <i>nachschlag</i>		<p>E4-F#4 trill:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eb</p> <p>X O X X X X</p> <p>While many prefer full fingerings for the turn out, if the use of full E4 is not clean, the trill fingering can be used:</p> <p>X X O O O O (Bb)</p>

bar 24: F#4		<p>Some bassoonists might prefer short (a.k.a. Bb) fingering of F#4 so the note does not stick out of the line / sonic texture within the <i>pp</i> dynamic.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eb O X O X X O Bb</p>
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While not an extremely technically challenging excerpt, younger bassoonists might experience difficulties with the trill and *nachschlag*. The trill is a whole step as denoted by the sharp accidental above the trill notation. A good first practice exercise is to remove the trill and work on the timing of the *nachschlag*. Each bassoonist will have their own interpretation and opinion of how quickly the *nachschlag* should be; cleanliness and clarity of the *nachschlag* D4-E4 should be goal. Here are exercises to develop *nachschlag* speed; note that increasing the *tempo* will also result in an increase of the “turn out.”



Example 9.3: Practice Exercise (*nachschnag*), Georges Bizet, *Carmen*, bassoon I part, bars 14-16

The whole step trill between E4-F#4 can feel awkward as bassoonists trill with two fingers, RH23. One way to help with the bulky trill fingering and develop trill speed, is to practice the trill metrically. In performance, rhythmic precisions of the trill might not be every bassoonist’s intent, but this exercise can help to develop smoothness of trill wiggle technique. Each iteration of the trill passage gets progressively faster while maintaining the same *tempo* by first starting with triplet subdivision, then quadruplets, quintuplets, sextuplets, septuplets, and lastly octuplets. Once a level of comfortable has been established with each subdivision at a particular *tempo*, then the *tempo* can be increased.



Example 9.4: Practice Exercise (trill), Georges Bizet, Carmen, bassoon I part, bars 14-16

While performance *tempos* can vary for this excerpt, a suggested median *tempo* is quarter note equals 100.

Sound Production

The bassoon passage includes quite a number of *staccato* notes. The *staccatos* should not be pointed or biting, but rather full and round with core sound. This is achieved with an ever-flowing air stream along with engaged core and obliques. To become familiar with the necessary constant air stream flow, a recommended exercise is to slur the entire passage. Once comfortable with maintaining this type of energized airstream, then there can be a return to the printed articulations.

Each *staccato* should be an energized puff of air. Depending on which vocal syllable utilized, this puff of air can be a quick gesture with a “hah” or “huh.” The tummy and side obliques should expand slightly out with each *staccato*. It is important to recall back to the completely slurred exercise described above, so not to close off the throat when stopping/lifting the air stream to achieve a *staccato* note length. The end of the *staccato* note should be determined by the puff of air engaged from the core and obliques.

This excerpt is based in G, first beginning in minor and closing in major. When practicing, the use of a G drone can help to find pitch center. This is especially important for bars 1-8, as the P5 interval of G-D is heavily present. In addition to a G drone, it is recommended to spot check tricky, tendency notes. A D4 drone can help with the opening P5 interval, as well as the use of an EE vowel because the D4 tends to be flat for many bassoonists. Other tendency notes are F# (bar 13) and E4 (bar 26).

Most of the printed dynamics within this excerpt are subito except for the *diminuendo* in bar 20. When executing the *diminuendo*, it is not uncommon for the pitch to rise as the dynamic decreases. This is often caused as a result of pinching the embouchure or constricting the throat and glottis. Instead of pinching, an increase in dampening of the embouchure and remaining open in the throat can help the pitch to not rise. When practicing the *diminuendo* a drone Bb can provide a good pitch reference while maintaining an open throat and continuous airstream used in the *staccato* exercise above, keeping the tongue and shoulders down, and use a more open syllabus such as “OH” or “AH.”

As mentioned in the prior section, there are quite a number of cracking prone notes throughout this excerpt. To assist with cracking on D4, especially the P5 leaps in the first 8 bars, some bassoonists might choose to flick/vent the D speaker key. On the G3s, use the OH or AH syllable and as you leap to the D4s change voicing to EE. D4 is often below pitch and using the EE syllable can help to stabilize intonation; be sure to avoid squeezing on D4 to not encourage a resultant pinched sound when moving to the F#4, as in bar 13.

Musical Gesture & Pacing

Within the narrative of Don José's military background and internal struggle, the excerpt is comprised of multiple 4-bar subphrases all within three larger phrases, bars 1-8, 9-16, and 17-28. Rhythmic and metric precision are key to bringing out the military quality representative of Don José. Metronome practice on the off beats, as well as the downbeats, is great to ensure steady *tempo*. Rhythmic precision of the off beats will give a greater ideal military, regimented aesthetic; this can be practiced and developed using the off-beat metronome exercise.

While this is an excerpt defined by rhythmic precision, the passage must also include phrasing and note groupings to help execution of the passage and trajectory of melodic and dynamic narrative. In bars 1-2, and similarly in bars 5-6, beat one of each bar should receive the emphasis and weight, rather than beat 2. It is not uncommon for beat 2 of these measures to be accented due to it being higher within the range. This should be avoided to maintain emphasis on downbeat, and this can be achieved by using G3s on beat 1 as a springboard to lift into the D4s, rather than driving into the D4s. Bar 3 should lead into the downbeat of bar 4. Additionally, maintaining a spinning airstream with a "lift-place" on Eb4 to D4 can help facilitate the passage technically but also aligns with material Don José will exclaim a bit later in his Act II entrance. Keeping in mind that downbeats are important for the military quality, the downbeat F#4 in bar 10 should receive an agogic accent with a slight taper to G4, then direct the line to bar 12.

The grace notes beginning in bar 17, should be snappy yet clearly audible. The phrase beginning at bar 17 should dynamically lead into the Bb3 of bar 20 to allow for a noticeable *diminuendo* into the key change of bar 21. The key change is the material where later Don José will articulate his internal conflict: "A matter of honor," (his responsibility to the military) against "an affair of the heart" (his lust for Carmen)¹⁶. As an exact repetition of bar 21, place an agogic accent on the downbeat of bar 22. To finish off the excerpt, filling out the sound from beat 2 of bar 24 through bar 26 allows for a tapered return to *pp* at the cadence.

¹⁶ Ibid., 111-112.

Example 9.5: Musical Map, Georges Bizet, *Carmen*, bassoon I part, Entr'acte, beginning to 8 bars after reh 1

Suggested Listening & Viewing

Bizet, Georges. *Carmen*. London Philharmonic Orchestra, John Alldis Choir, Boys' Chorus from Haberdashers' Aske's School, Sir Georg Solti. With Tatiana Troyanos, Kiri Te Kanawa, Plácido Domingo, José van Dam. Recorded July and December 1975, Henry Wood Hall, London. London 414 489-2, 1985, compact discs.

———. *Carmen*. The Metropolitan Opera, Louis Langrée. Performed February 2, 2019. The MET Opera on Demand, Recorded Broadcast, 2019. Video Stream, 172 min.

———. *Bizet Carmen*. Orchestra National Du Capitole De Toulouse, Michel Plasson. Recorded November 28, 2005. Warner Music, 2005, Alexander Street, Streaming Audio.

———. *Carmen*. The Royal Opera House, Zubin Meta. With Maria Ewing, Luis Lima, Leontina Vaduva, Gino Quilico. Recorded live Royal Opera House, Covent Gardens. Alexander Street: Arthaus Musik, 1991, 163 min.

Additional notable excerpts from *Carmen*:

1. From Entr'acte between Act I and Act II: reh 2 to fermata after reh 3
2. Act II, No. 18: 6 bars after reh 51 to 52
3. Act IV, No. 26: bar 3 to 4 bars after reh 12, and reh 21 for 16 bars

Chapter 10: OTELLO

Otello (1887)

Music: Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Libretto: Arrigo Boito (1842-1918)

Based on William Shakespeare's *Othello, the Moor of Venice* (1604)

Dramma lirico in Italian in 4 Acts

Premiered in La Scala, Milan (February 1887)

Opera Synopsis

The Venetian general and governor of the island of Cyprus, Otello, has just returned victorious from a raid against the Turks.¹ While Otello was away, the young Venetian Roderigo fell madly in love with Desdemona, Otello's new bride. Ensign Iago, recently having been passed over for a promotion by Otello in favor of the lieutenant Cassio, promises to help Roderigo win over Desdemona in order to destroy Otello.² Iago constructs a scheme that results in the Venetian nobleman Roderigo and Cassio getting into a fight; Otello reprimands and demotes the newly promoted Cassio.³

Iago suggests that Cassio speak with Desdemona to ask for her help in restoring his promotion.⁴ Cassio seeks out Desdemona in the garden, which Otello oversees the scene; Iago plants the notion of Desdemona's infidelity in Otello's thoughts, which stirs Otello's jealousy. Otello refuses to listen to Desdemona's pleas to return Cassio to his former rank. Iago continues to fuel Otello's jealousy once he's obtained Desdemona's handkerchief; Iago fabricates a story that Cassio dreamed of Desdemona. Bursting with jealousy, Otello with Iago's support, vows to seek revenge on Desdemona and Cassio.⁵

Desdemona asks again about Cassio; Otello demands that Desdemona produce her handkerchief. Unable to produce the handkerchief, Otello slaps Desdemona and calls her a whore.⁶ Iago's scheming

¹ Nico Castel, trans., "Otello," in *The Complete Verdi Libretti* Vol. 1 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1994-1996), 379.

² Ibid., 379.

³ Ibid., 379.

⁴ Ibid., 380.

⁵ Ibid., 380.

⁶ Ibid., 380.

continues to unfold leading to Otello confirming his belief that Desdemona has been unfaithful; Otello plans to kill Desdemona with Iago's assistance. The Doge has recalled Otello and appoints Cassio as the new Venetian governor.⁷ Unable to control his emotions at this news, Otello in a fit of rage throws Desdemona to the ground and he suffers a seizure.⁸

As Desdemona prepares for bed, just finishing her evening prayer, Otello enters where he tells her he is going to kill her. In protest, Desdemona pleads her innocence. Otello strangles Desdemona. Once Iago's plot and scheming has been revealed, and having realized what he has just done, Otello stabs himself.⁹

Act I: 8 bars before reh C to 8 bars after reh D ("Una vela! Una vela")

Excerpt 1: Scene Information

Act I opens with a sparkling and threatening orchestral entrance signaling a thunderstorm rolling in. Cypriots are standing by the harbor watching Otello's ships at sea being thrashed about as they come into port.¹⁰ Occurring within the first ninety seconds of the opera's opening, the bassoon excerpt is heard, capturing the musical representation of the rough, stormy waters.

⁷ Ibid., 380.

⁸ Ibid., 380.

⁹ Ibid., 380.

¹⁰ Ibid., 379.

The musical score is written for two bassoon parts (I and II) in bass clef. It consists of 24 bars of music, organized into six systems of two staves each. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

- Bar 1:** Starts with a *stacc.* marking. The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 2:** Similar to Bar 1, but the second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 3:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 4:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 5:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 6:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 7:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 8:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 9:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 10:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 11:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 12:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 13:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 14:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 15:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 16:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 17:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 18:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 19:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 20:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 21:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 22:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 23:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.
- Bar 24:** The first staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3. The second staff has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note Bb2, and quarter note C3.

Example 10.1: Giuseppe Verdi, *Otello*, bassoon I-II part, 8 bars before reh C to 8 bars after reh D

Excerpt 1: Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

As briefly mentioned above, the bassoon passage occurs within the orchestra's musical representation of the opening storm scene. While on the stage, the lieutenant Cassio, commandant Montano, and other Cypriots are commenting on the weather and Otello's fleet coming into port.

The passage might be considered an instance of word-painting when examining the relationship of orchestra musical representation in support of libretto text. For instance, at rehearsal C the exposed *tutti* bassoon joined by low strings begins a sequence of ascending scalar passages, while the chorus of Cypriots comment about Otello's ship being in the clouds, "In the clouds it hides itself."¹¹ In bars 2-3 after reh C, taking over from the bassoons, the piccolo and oboes descend the line as the as the Cypriots say, "and in the sea."¹²



Example 10.2: Giuseppe Verdi, *Otello*, full score, bars 2-3 after reh C

The persistent wave-like gesture between the upward bassoon gestures and piccolo and oboe lines at rehearsal C depict Otello's ship being bounced around by the sea waves.

Beginning 7 bars after rehearsal C, the chorus exclaims "Lightning! Thunder!"¹³ along with what might be perceived as a lightning strike by the upper strings, upper woodwinds, and brass with the

¹¹ Nico Castel, trans., "Otello." in *The Complete Verdi Libretti* Vol. 3 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1994-1996), 383.

¹² *Ibid.*, 383.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 383.

weather accompaniment thunder rumbles heard in the bassoons, viola, cellos, and double basses rolling sixteenth notes. The bassoons along with the rest of the orchestra are instrumentally reinforcing the scene and action on stage.

Beginning 4 bars after rehearsal D there is another example of sea wave rocking back and forth as heard between the bassoons and clarinets, also being doubled in the strings. This musical word-painting supports the chorus' libretto, "Shake the waves, shake the air."¹⁴



Example 10.3: Giuseppe Verdi, *Otello*, full score, bars 4-6 after reh D

Libretto¹⁵

CYPRIOTS

Una vela! Un vessillo!

A sail! A flag!

MONTANO

É l'alato Leon!

It's the winged Lion!

CASSIO

Or la folgor lo svela.

Now the lightening reveals it.

OTHERS

Uno squillo!

A trumpet blast!

¹⁴ Ibid., 382-383.

¹⁵ Ibid., 382-383.

ALL

Ha tuonato il cannon.

Has sounded the cannon.

CASSIO

É la nave del Duce.

It's the ship of our leader.

MONTANO

Or s'affonda or s'inciela...

Now it sinks, now it rears skyward...

CASSIO

Erge il rostro dall'onda.

Rises the prow from the waves.

SOME CYPRIOTS

Nelle nubi si cela e nel mar,

In the clouds it hides itself and in the sea,

e alla luce dei lampo ne appar.

and at the light of the lighting flashes it appears to us.

ALL

Lampi! tuoni! gorghi! turbi tempestosi e fulmini!

Lightning! Thunder! Whirlpools! Winds stormy and thunderbolts!

Treman l'onde, treman l'aure,

Shake the waves, shake the air,

treman basi e culmini.

shake foundations and tops (of buildings).

(The waves, air, foundations and tops of buildings are quaking from the storm.)

Technique & Practice

Rehearsal C-D is the most technically challenging section of this excerpt including three ascending scales and repeating descending modulating tetra scales. The first six bars at rehearsal C are scales that begin on scale degree 5: rehearsal C is a B melodic minor scale, bar 3 of rehearsal C is a C major scale, and 5 bars after rehearsal C is a D melodic minor scale. The repeating descending tetra scales beginning 5 bars before rehearsal D are all based on Bb: beginning first in Bb major, then to Bb minor, and then to Bb minor with a chromatic passing tone.

Incorporating these tonal areas and specific scales into daily routine is an important way to start scale and/or note pattern learning and recognition towards comfortability in order to execute the passage. Other recommended practice exercises for rehearsal C-D are practice rhythms and forward/backward to assist with technique development. For both passages it will prove beneficial to keep fingers close to the body of the bassoon which helps to minimize movement between each fingering resulting in the ability to play passages more quickly. Finger height should be incorporated into the practice exercises from the start of study on the excerpt. To not leave it solely to the feel of how high each finger moves between notes, the use of a body-length mirror can help to identify fingers which can afford to be closer to the bassoon.

Verdi provides an opening *tempo* direction of “*Allegro agitato*” and the *tempo* marking of half note equals 76. Some performances might be a metronome click or two faster, but the provided *tempo* marking is a perfectly acceptable *tempo* to be working towards. In addition to developing *tempo* via consecutive increase of the metronome, the up10/down5 practice technique should also be of use.

As bassoonists work towards the noted fast *tempo*, it will be important to maintain relaxed posture especially within fingers, hands, wrists, and arms. Specifically, notes within the tetra scales use fingers that are often experienced or described as sluggish or slow. Any strain or overuse of the ring and pinky fingers can insight tension, which should be avoided in development and execution of the passage.

This excerpt is one where the use multiple fingerings for the same pitch might provide some technical ease and assist with musical notations. Either short or full C#4 can be used throughout the passage, it is highly suggested to use a full C#4 in bar 4 of rehearsal C to help with the accent. For bars 3 and 4 before rehearsal D at the Bb minor tetra scales, each bassoonist will need to decide which fingering pattern will be best for them individually to facilitate the passage while maintaining relaxation of technique. Two finger pattern suggestions for these two bars are:

||: Bb – front Ab – pinky slide to front Gb – pinky slide to F :||
||: Bb – front Ab – back Gb – F :||

It is recommended to use the front Gb2 and Gb3 to help facilitate respective Gb-Bb intervals at 2 bars before rehearsal D. Lastly, if the instrument in use has a whisper lock, then this mechanism should be engaged during the rest just before the tetra scales (6 bars before rehearsal D) and can remain engaged through the remainder of the excerpt.

Sound Production

This excerpt is unique from the others included in this collection for quick changes of air stream and core/oblique usage necessary between the three passages. Opening and closing the excerpts requires lifted *staccato* articulations and the middle section uses a longer airstream directed to a specific end point.

As the *tempo* is rather brisk perhaps making breathing a concern, the most important recommendation is to establish a BSG plan. Knowing when a bassoonist is going to breathe, set the embouchure, and go can help to keep calm and relaxed, which will aid reduction of tension physically, it will also ensure that entrances are precisely on time.

Musical Gesture & Pacing

While the opening of Act I contains “Hollywood” levels of excitement complete with energy from the stage and the orchestra pit, it is important to do the dynamics that Verdi has written on the page to help keep sonically blended with the various orchestra sections the bassoon voice plays with in unison as well as to conserve energy for the more than two-hours-long opera that still lies ahead.

Even within soft dynamics, there are ways to maintain trajectories of energy and motion. This is achieved by playing to the contour of the line and using note groupings. At rehearsal C, one preferred note grouping to incorporate is a 2-3-4-1 (“I-go-to-HERE”) followed by a tension release when arriving at the accented quarter note – eighth note. Whereas 5 bars before rehearsal D, a preferred note grouping is 1-2-3-4 (“HERE-I-go-to”) to focus on the first note of each sixteenth groupings to then almost not think about the remaining three notes.

At the entrance after rehearsal D, Verdi is specific of this use of the *staccato* marking, or lack thereof on the majority of eighth notes that land on the downbeat. The non-*staccato* eighth note is dovetailed, or moment of passing off, between bassoons and clarinets. By having a bit of resonance on the C2 and Bb1 allows for a better handoff.

The musical score is written for bassoon I and consists of six staves. The notation includes various articulation and dynamic markings:

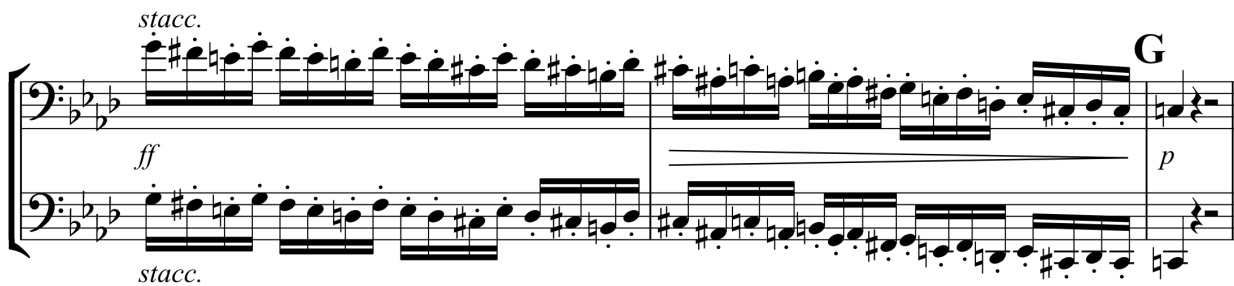
- Staff 1:** Starts with a *stacc.* marking. Red 'V' symbols are placed above several eighth notes. Red double-headed arrows (< >) are placed below the notes. A *pp* marking is at the beginning. A *sim.* marking is above a later eighth note.
- Staff 2:** Continues the melodic line. A *p* marking is below a note. A red 'C' is placed above a measure.
- Staff 3:** Features a *f* marking below a note. Red double-headed arrows (< >) are placed below the notes.
- Staff 4:** Includes a *sim.* marking above a note. A red 'D' and a '3' are placed above a measure.
- Staff 5:** Features a *ff* marking below a note. Red double-headed arrows (< >) are placed below the notes.
- Staff 6:** Continues the melodic line with red double-headed arrows (< >) placed below the notes.

Example 10.4: Musical Map, Giuseppe Verdi, *Otello*, bassoon I part, 8 bars before reh C to 8 bars after reh D

Act II: 2 bars before reh G to reh G (“Credo in un Dio crudel”)

Excerpt 2: Scene Information

In a hall of Otello’s castle, manipulative Iago suggests that Cassio ask Desdemona to speak with Otello about his demotion and ask her to use her influence on Otello to have Cassio reinstated.¹⁶ Cassio leaves the hall to find Desdemona in the garden outside, leaving Iago watching and voicing his bleak view and hatred of humankind.¹⁷



Example 10.5: Giuseppe Verdi, Otello, bassoon I-II part, 2 bars before reh G to reh G

Excerpt 2: Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

In “Credo in un Dio crudel,” an alone Iago reveals his true nature through this frightening *aria*. The bassoon excerpt occurs in between Iago’s line where he asserts his belief that man is doomed to

¹⁶ Ibid., 380.

¹⁷ Ibid., 380.

suffer an evil fate from birth to death. In another instance of word-painting, the descending orchestral passage musically describes Iago's specific words, "... to the worm of the grave."¹⁸

Libretto¹⁹

E credo l'uom gioco d'iniqua sorte

And I believe man (to be the) plaything of iniquitous fate

Dal germe della culla la verme dell'avel

From the germ of the cradle to the worm of the grave.

Technique & Practice

Within the short excerpt there are two very distinct scalar patterns used for the first and second bars: descending scale fragments and descending thirds. Similar to the first *Otello* bassoon excerpt previously discussed, this second excerpt is best learned and developed by incorporating tonal areas and scale patterns into daily routine as well as the use of the various practice techniques such as practice rhythms and forward/backward. Additionally, the popcorn practice technique can help to familiarize bassoonists with patterns as well as provide a different approach to engaging with the excerpt and learning and the passage's patterns.

When working through the popcorn practice exercise, it is important to make sure the air flow goes all the way the end of the excerpted line, while maintaining direction of line throughout. Here are a few popcorn practice exercises for the measures before rehearsal G:

¹⁸ Nico Castel, trans., "Otello," in *The Complete Verdi Libretti* Vol. 3 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1994-1996), 409.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 409.

The image displays six staves of musical notation, labeled A through G, for the bassoon I part of Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello*. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Staves A, B, and C show a continuous flow of notes with various slurs and ties. Staff D features a more complex, rapid passage with many slurs. Staff E and F show a change in articulation, with notes marked with 'F' and 'H' above them, indicating specific fingerings or breath marks. Staff G continues the rapid passage, also with 'H' marks. The notation includes various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and rests.

Example 10.6: Practice Exercise (popcorn), Giuseppe Verdi, *Otello*, bassoon I part, bars 2 bars before reh G to reh G

As bassoonists approach this excerpt, one suggestion is to first slur the entire passage. Not only will this encourage maintaining a constant air stream when the *staccato* articulations are reintroduced, but it will help to pinpoint those intervals with less than clean technique. In slurring the passage, it will be important to listen (either live or recorded practice reflection) to what is happening/heard between each note. If there are any blips that will be the giveaway that the timing of fingering technique is not precise requiring detection to identify and address the concern. When the *staccato* articulation is reintroduced using engaged obliques and core, it will be important to tongue to the fingers. The articulation and change of each note needs to be precisely in time for clarity and execution of the passage.

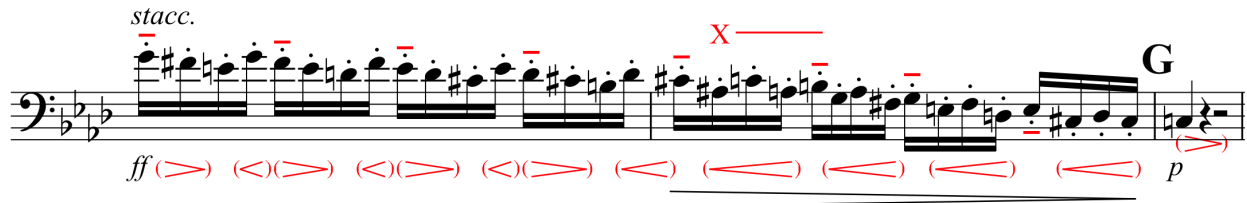
In regard to fingerings, use whichever options will best for execution and clarity. A few preferred options in the first bassoon part are front/full F#4, full C#4, and to depress the C vent key between A#3 to B3 in the bar before rehearsal G. After the vent key has been released, the second A3 (the seventh sixteenth note) in the bar before rehearsal G, can be half-holed if a bassoonist prefers this to flicking/venting. For the bassoon II part it will be most helpful to engage the bassoon whisper lock mechanism.

Sound Production

As the passage descends, moving to lower syllables such as AHs or OHs, as well as pulling back on the reed to have slightly less blade in the embouchure will help moving into the low register. This should be done while maintaining a soft cushioned embouchure with corners towards the nose keeping teeth/jaw separated. In this all-*staccato* passage, it will also be important to keep the jaw steady when executing each *staccato* note. Airstream puffs with core engagement rather than jaw motion, or “gumming” of the reed, should be used to produce a *staccato* sound.

Musical Gesture & Pacing

A great starting point is to play to the contour of the line and the note groupings within the excerpt. While Verdi specifies a *decrescendo* in the bar before rehearsal G, the airstream should intensify with the 2-3-4-1 groupings to keep the line moving. The suggested musical map below demonstrated air note grouping, air gestures by the bracketed dynamics. A similar airstream motion, as seen in the bassoon 1 part, is applicable and useful for the bassoon 2 line moving to the low register.



Example 10.7: Musical Map, Giuseppe Verdi, *Otello*, bassoon I part, 2 bars before reh G to reh G

Suggested Listening & Viewing

Verdi, Giuseppe. *Otello*. Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Chorus, Sir Georg Solti. With Luciano Pavarotti, Kiri Te Kanawa, Leo Nucci. Recorded April 8, 12, 16, 19, 1991, Orchestra Hall, Chicago, Carnegie Hall, New York. London 433 669-2, 1991, compact discs.

———. *Otello/Verdi*. Chorus and Orchestra of the Teatro alla Scala, Lorin Maazel. With Katia Ricciarelli, Plácido Domingo, Justino Díaz. New York: EMI Classics, 2006, NAXOS online.

———. *Otello*. The Metropolitan Opera, Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Performed October 17, 2015. The MET Opera on Demand, Recorded Broadcast, 2015. Video Stream, 164 min.

———. *Otello*. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna State Opera Chorus, Vienna Children's Chorus, Herbert von Karajan. With Renata Tebaldi, Ana Raquel Satre, Mario Del Monaco, Aldo Protti. Recorded May 1961, Sofiensall, Vienna. London 411 618-2, 1987, LP sound discs.

Additional notable excerpt from *Otello*

1. Act III: reh H for 16 bars

Chapter 11: MANON LESCAUT

Manon Lescaut (1893)

Music: Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Libretto: Domenico Oliva (1860-1917) & Luigi Illica (1957-1919)¹

Based on the novel *L'histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* by
Abbé Antoine-François Prévost²

Drama Lirico in Italian in 4 Acts

Premiered: Turin, Teatro Regio (February 1, 1893)

(rev. version, Milan Teatro alla Scala, February 7, 1894)

Opera Synopsis

A group of students outside the Paris gate are passing the time by flirting with the local working girls; des Grieux doesn't join his companions.³ A coach carrying the tax collector Geronte de Ravoire, the solidier Lescaut, and Lescaut's sister Manon arrive from Arras; the passengers seek a room from the inn. des Grieux falls in love with Manon at first sight. Manon is being instructed by her father to join a convent; Manon agrees to meet des Grieux later. One of the students, Edmondo, overhears a conversation between Geronte and Lescaut; Geronte's plans to abduct Manon.⁴ Edmondo tells des Grieux these plans; des Grieux meets with Manon and the two take off in Geronte's coach. Geronte, wanting to chase after the couple, is told by Lescaut to have patience: Manon will eventually bore of living in poverty with des Grieux, and Geronte will then be able to take her away.⁵

At the start of Act II, now living an unhappy life of luxury in Paris with Geronte, Manon regrets having left des Grieux. Lescaut tells Manon that he has befriended des Grieux and turned him on to gambling; if des Grieux wins enough money he would be able to provide Manon the life of luxury and win her back. Seeing his sister's sadness, Lescaut leaves to bring des Grieux to Manon. When Manon is

¹ Julian Budden, "Illica, Luigi (opera)," *Grove Music Online*. ed. Deane Root, accessed November 22, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Julian Budden, "Manon Lescaut (ii)," *Grove Music Online*. ed. Deane Root, accessed November 22, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³ Nico Castel, trans., "Manon Lescaut," in *The Complete Puccini Libretti*, Vol. 2 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1994), 467.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 468.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 468.

alone, des Grieux enters; even though des Grieux is upset with Manon, she is able to win him over. The lovers are interrupted by Geronte; Manon insults Geronte, who flees to call the police. Des Grieux insists that Manon leave with him immediately, but Manon says that she cannot leave without her jewels. Geronte arrives with the police, and Manon and des Grieux are arrested.

Manon is being held with prostitutes all awaiting deportation to America. Lescaut has bribed a prison guard to release Manon, however Lescaut's bribe attempt did not work. As the women are being boarded on the ship, des Grieux begs the captain to let him sail with them, to which the captain agrees and des Grieux boards the ship. Now in America, and on the run, Manon and des Grieux are tiring with thirst and exhaustion. des Grieux leaves Manon in search of water. Unable to find water, des Grieux returns to a dying Manon, and in her last breaths she tells des Grieux she loves him.

**Act I: reh 1 to 4 bars after reh 2 and reh 3 to 5 bars after reh 5
(from orchestral introduction and "Ave, sera gentile")**

Scene Information

At the very top of Act I, students, townspeople, and soldiers are walking, talking, drinking, and gambling around the Amiens square and avenue on a summer's eve.⁶ Edmundo leads his fellow students in a madrigal.⁷ It is within the orchestral opening scene establishment and when Edmundo begins to lead his fellow students in song that we hear the bassoon excerpts.

⁶ Julian Budden, "Manon Lescaut (ii)," *Grove Music Online*. ed. Deane Root, accessed November 26, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁷ Nico Castel, trans., "Manon Lescaut," in *The Complete Puccini Libretti*, Vol. 2 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1994), 470.

Allegro Brillante 1

p dolce

p leg.

2

f

Example 11.1: Giacomo Puccini, *Manon Lescaut*, bassoon I part, reh 1 to 4 bars after reh 2

Allegro Brillante 3

p cantando

fp fp fp fp fp fp

p

p

p

p

p

string.

p 5 *a tempo* *p*

Example 11.2: Giacomo Puccini, *Manon Lescaut*, bassoon I part, reh 3 to 5 bars after reh 5

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

The bassoon excerpts are from the orchestral introduction and the beginning of Edmondo's *aria* "Ave, sera gentile" (rehearsal 4). The orchestral introduction portrays a busy scene of people living their lives: strolling the square, talking and visiting, and playing cards and gambling. This opening, as well as the Manon Lescaut plot, lends itself to the *verismo* and *giovane sculoa* styles with which Puccini has become associated.⁸ When reduced to a basic melodic level, the orchestral introduction is comprised of two distinct tunes: a quick articulated gesture, and a singing, impassioned tune as we hear within the bassoon excerpts from the orchestral introduction (reh 1-4).

A through-composed opera, there is no break between the end of the orchestral introduction and the start of Edmondo's *aria*, "Ave, sera gentile" beginning at rehearsal 4. Here at Edmondo's *aria*, the key transitions to F# minor from A major. The bassoon, in octaves with piccolo, flute, and clarinet, plays a series of scale arpeggios based in the pentatonic arpeggios with a familiar snap figure heard in the orchestral opening. While the opera opens light and robust in A major, Edmondo's *aria* quickly turns to a minor mode, and the description of the evening can be considered a representation and foreshadow of the emotional instability of the characters throughout the opera.

Libretto⁹

EDMONDO

Ave, sera gentile che discendi

Hail, evening gentle that sounds

Col tuo corteo di zeffiri e di stelle;

With your train of breezes and of stars;

⁸ Matteo Sansone, "Verismo," *Grove Music Online*. ed. Deane Root, accessed November 28, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁹ Nico Castel, trans., "Manon Lesaut," in *The Complete Puccini Libretti*, Vol. 2 (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.1994), 470.

Ave, cara ai poeti ed agli amanti...

Hail, dear to poets and to lovers...

(Hail to you, oh evening, so dear to poets and lovers...)

STUDENTS

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ai ladri ed ai briachi!

Ah! Ah! Ah! To thieves and to drunkards!

(Ah! Ah! Ah!... and also dear to thieves and drunkards!)

Noi t'abbiamo spezzato il madrigal!

We have you cut short the song!

(We have cut your song short!)



Technique

Within the two excerpts, they maintain a range of F#2 to A4. Rather scalar and tonal, incorporating the respective key areas of A Major, D Major, F# minor, and chromatics into daily routine will aid in familiarity and transference of fingering, embouchure, and vowel options when working on these excerpts. More on embouchure and vowel options in Sound Production below.

For some bassoonists, depending on *tempo*, the use of double tonguing will prove helpful at rehearsal 2. If double tonguing is being employed here, it is best to not breathe after the C#4 downbeat in bar 2 after rehearsal 2.

There are a few notes to be mindful of in regard to fingerings selections, so they do not pop in / out of the sonic texture. A few of these are G#4, F#4, E4, C#4. Getting to beat 3 two bars before rehearsal 4, if using a full C#4 fingering, it would then be recommended to use front F#3 so not to overextend need of the left-hand thumb between these two notes. Additionally, here are a few suggestions of fingering options for the notated and written out ornaments within the two excerpts.¹⁰

¹⁰ Gerald Corey, *Bassoon Trills, Shakes and Skills*, (Ottawa: Lucian Badian Editions, 2002), 27 and 35.

3 bars before reh 2: D#4-E mordent		Eb X X O X O X
5 bars before reh 4: G#3-A3 plus <i>nachschlag</i>		Full / Normal Fingering: Ab ½ X X X X X W
		Depending on instrument and reed setup, this fingering might be inconsistent with ½ step trill Ab ½ X X X X X W

When it comes to trills, musically there are different opinions which bassoonists might have regarding approaches to pacing and timing. For this brisk passage, it is advised to plan out the number of wiggles for the trill before moving into the *nachschlag*. The number of wiggles within the noted time should also factor into which fingering option to select for the G#3-A4 trill before rehearsal 4. At an *allegro brillante tempo*, there might only be enough time for 1 or 2 wiggles, and these can be practiced rhythmically along with the exiting *nachschlag*. For speed development, the gradual increase of metronome clicks and up10/down5 practice suggestions will be helpful.



Example 11.3: Practice Exercise (trill), Giacomo Puccini, Manon Lescaut, bassoon I part, 5 bars before reh 4

Sound Production

The two excerpts contain mostly lyrical and singing-like melodies with some articulated moments. As like many other excerpts within this collection, for the lyrical moments, a continuous, open, unrestricted air flow is essential. The bassoon passages are not soloistic where a lone bassoon voice is heard above the orchestra, but rather the bassoon color needs to fit within a collection of instrumental sections also playing the respective passages. A *vibrato* choice should be one that lends itself to blend with the other instruments. Additionally, dynamically bassoonists should consider the dynamic directions Puccini includes, *dolce* at rehearsal 1 and *cantando* at rehearsal 3. Puccini does write the passages should be in a *piano* dynamic, however this dynamic might be considered relative to the orchestra and vocal ensemble on stage. Perhaps a good way to view these passages is full tone within the sweet and singing-like directions from Puccini.

There are a number of downward and upward leaps which span to a minor seventh within the two excerpts. Vowel changes will help facilitate the down leaps and up leaps. In general, for down leaps the vowel will need to open, moving from an EE or AY to an AY or OH. An up leap will need to close the vowel, moving from an OH or AY to an AY or EE (all depending on each bassoonists vowel preference). With the quick *allegro brillante tempo*, the vowel change, and fingering technique must be aligned so the air, vowel, and fingering technique all engage at the appropriate times to facilitate the leap without stopping the trajectory of the musical line and passage.

Breathing can be a major concern within these two excerpts. The use of quick breaths can be helpful to find brief moments to inhale enough air to continue to passage. Remember with quick breaths that the inhale vowel should be as low as possible. The first excerpt might not pose as great a breathing plan challenge as the second excerpt does. Within the second excerpt at rehearsal 4, if it is preferred to breathe after the printed half notes, then all half note releases need to sound / be shaped the same, whether there is a breath or not.

Musical Gesture and Pacing

Puccini is generous with musical gesture directions within the score. A good place to start when incorporating dynamics, gestures, etc. is to do exactly what Puccini has directed to on the page. On top of Puccini's marking, there needs to be a second level of air stream engagement and directionality to help facilitate the small gestures within the larger phrasing. One quick gesture worth pointing out is the 32nd notes within the second excerpt. These 32nd notes should be played as upbeats to the "&" of the beat and use a stopped tongue on the paired 8th note.

As noted in the Musical Map below, specifically at the first two entrances within rehearsal 1, there are two layers of directions. This hyperactivity of air flow and phrasing is made possible with flexible engagement of obliques.

Locking in with the conductor at change of section and *tempo* changes will be helpful when working within an ensemble. Puccini elides the thematic sections within the orchestral introduction and in "Ave, sera gentile." In the listening suggestions provided, a slight phrasing off with just enough breathing space before the new section begins can be noticed, which can be heard moving into rehearsal 1, 3 and 4.

Allegro Brillante 1

p dolce

(um)

p leg.

2

f

Allegro Brillante 3

p cantando *fp* *p* *tr* *4* *p* *5* *a tempo* *string.* *p* *p*

Example 11.5: Musical Map, Giacomo Puccini, *Manon Lescaut*, bassoon I part, reh 3 to 5 bars after reh 5

Suggested Listening & Viewing

- Puccini, Giacomo. *Manon Lescaut*. Ambrosian Opera Chorus, New Philharmonia Orchestra. Bruno Bartoletti. With Montserrat Caballé, Pacido Domingo, Noël Mangin. Recorded July and December 1971 at Brent Town Hall and No. 1 Studio, Abbey Road, London. EMI Classics 0777 7 64852 2 5, 1994, compact discs.
- . *Manon Lescaut*. Coro e Orchestra de. Teatro alla Scala. Lorin Maazel. With Nina Rautio, Gina Quilico, Peter Dvorsky. Recorded at the Teatro Abanella, Milan, Feb. 11-15, 1992. Sony Classical S2K 48474, 1993, compact discs.
- . *Manon Lescaut*. The Metropolitan Opera, Fabio Luisi. Performance March 5, 2016. The MET Opera on Demand, Recorded Broadcast, 2016. On Demand Online, 144 min.
- . *Manon Lescaut*. Philharmonia Orchestra, Chorus of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. Giuseppe Sinopoli. With Mirella Freni, Renato Bruson, Plácido Domingo, Kurt Rydl, Robert Gambill, George Macpherson. Deutsche Grammophon 413 893-2, 1984, compact discs.

Chapter 12: SALOME

Salome, Op. 54 (1905)

Music: Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Libretto: Hedwig Lachmann (1865-1918), ed. Richard Strauss

Based on Hedwig Lachmann's German translation of *Salomé* (tragedy) by Oscar Wilde

Musikdrama in German in 1 Act

Premiered: Dresden, Hofoper (Staatsoper) (December 9, 1905)¹

Opera Synopsis

Herod, Tetrarch of Judea, is having a birthday banquet in his palace. From outside the terrace, Narraboth, Captain of the Guard, longs for Salome, Herod's stepdaughter who sits at supper.² The imprisoned Jokanaan (John the Baptist) is heard from the underground cistern, where he has been sentenced for constant condemnation of Herodias, Salome's mother.³ Annoyed by Herod's gaze, Salome leaves the banquet for the terrace.⁴ Salome overhears Jokanaan and wants to know who it is. Salome is aware that Jokanaan has denounced Herodias for marrying Herod (her husband's brother), and that Herodias loathes Jokanaan and that her stepfather Herod is afraid of him.⁵ Salome persuades Narraboth to let her see Jokanaan. Disregarding Herod's orders, Narraboth has Jokanaan brought out of the cistern. Jokanaan emerges cursing the incestuous relationship of Salome's mother, Herodias, and Herod. Salome lusts over Jokanaan demanding a kiss. Salome tries to tempt Jokanaan; Narraboth, unable to witness Salome's seduction attempts, kills himself; Jokanaan rejects Salome's advances and returns to his cistern.⁶

In pursuit of Salome, Herod comes out of the banquet to the terrace, and begins to hallucinate.⁷ Lusting for Salome, Herod tries to get her to drink wine and eat fruit, and even to sit to him. Herodias

¹ David Murray, "Salome," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 11, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Nico Castel, trans. "Salome," in *Four Strauss Libretto* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2002), 281.

³ *Ibid.*, 281.

⁴ David Murray, "Salome," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 11, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁵ Nico Castel, trans. "Salome," in *Four Strauss Libretto* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2002), 281.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 281.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 281.

objects to Herod's action, and ultimately Salome rejects Herod. Jokanaan is heard from the cistern again, prompting a theological debate between Herod's Jewish and Nazarene guests.⁸

Now Herod tries to persuade Salome to dance for him, Herodias disapproves, and at first Salome declines.⁹ Herod offers Salome anything she chooses in return. Salome does dance for Herod and demands Jokanaan's head on the silver platter. Herod is not happy about Salome's request and tries to offer her other riches; Salome refuses to accept anything other than Jokanaan's head, forcing Herod to keep his word.¹⁰ Upon seeing Jokanaan's severed head, Salome seizes it, talking to it as it was still alive, and caressing it. Shocked and disgusted, Herod orders his guards to crush Salome to death.¹¹

Scene 4, Tanz "Dance of the Seven Veils": 4 bars before reh S to reh V

Scene Information

Before the orchestral set piece, the scene is a whirl of action: Herod and Herodias bicker over his salacious interest in Salome; Herodias is angered by Jokanaan's censure and insults of her marriage to Herod as heard from the cistern; and a religious argument occurs between the Jews and Nazarenes.¹² Herod asks Salome to dance for him, a request to which at first, she refuses. Herod tries to convince Salome by offering her anything she wants, even offering to give Salome half of his kingdom. Salome agrees to dance once Herod swears to keep his promise to give her anything for which she asks. Herodias is against Salome dancing for her husband and pleads with her daughter to not go through with it. As

⁸ David Murray, "Salome," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 11, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Nico Castel, trans. "Salome," in *Four Strauss Libretto* (Geneseo, N.Y.: Leyerle, c.2002), 282.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 282.

¹² Daria Santini, "'That Invisible Dance'. Reflections on the 'Dance of the Seven Veils' in Richard Strauss's 'Salome,'" *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 29, no. 2 (2011): 234.

Salome intends to ask for Jokanaan's head on a silver platter, a request her mother Herodias will be decidedly happy about, the dance she performs is a means to an end rather than an act to satisfy Herod.

Depending on stage director and choreographer, the artistic interpretation of the dance can vary significantly. In the score, Salome's "Dance of the Seven Veils," does not contain choreography direction for the soprano regarding dance style, but rather offers structural moments within the dance scene:

The musicians begin a wild dance. [...] Salome rises to her full height and makes a sign to the musicians.

They subdue the wild rhythm instantly and lead on to a soft and swaying tune.

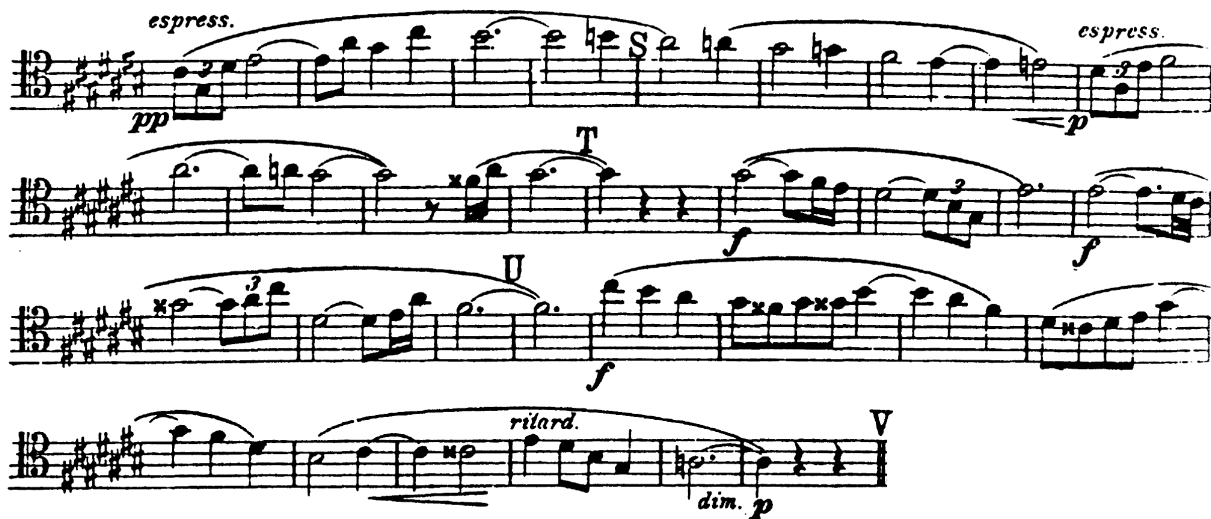
Salome remains for an instant in a visionary attitude near the cistern where Jokanaan is kept prisoner, - then throws herself at Herod's feet.¹³

The "Dance of the Seven Veils" is the "center piece"¹⁴ and "the dramatic turning point of the opera [and] charts the protagonist's transformation from willful adolescent into passionate woman."¹⁵ The opera's plot has been building to this moment, and it is Salome's request for Jokanaan's head that drives the conclusion of the opera. The opera and "Dance of the Seven Veils" are known for female self-expression and independence, alongside scandal and controversy. The dance with no libretto, depending on performance *tempi*, can maintain a duration of seven to nine minutes with the bassoon excerpt occurring a little more than halfway through the dance.

¹³ Michael Bennett, *Refiguring Oscar Wilde's Salome*, (New York: Rodopi, 2011), 14.

¹⁴ Udo Kultermann, "The Dance of the Seven Veils. Salome and Erotic Culture around 1900" *Artibus et Historiae* 27, no. 53 (2006): 187.

¹⁵ Daria Santini, "'That Invisible Dance'. Reflections on the 'Dance of the Seven Veils' in Richard Strauss's 'Salome,'" *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 29, no. 2 (2011): 234.



Example 12.1: Richard Strauss, *Salome*, bassoon I part, 4 bars before reh S to reh V

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

The opera and “Dance of the Seven Veils” are vehicles for discussion of many musicological, cultural, and societal topics such as female sexual identity, feminism, self-expression, eroticism at the turn of the 20th Century (Salomania), biblical representation in opera and in the arts, morality, and much more. It is here in the dance that all dialogue and plot ceases to allow a moment for the “*femme fatale* ... striptease”¹⁶ accompanied by a full orchestra to enchant and hypnotize Herod as well as the audience.

The orchestral set piece maintains a quarter note pulse moving between 2/4, 3/4 and 5/4. The bassoon excerpt is within a passage of waltzing 3/4 in C# major. Strauss could have written the passage in Db major, the enharmonic equivalent of C# major, to help ease the mental anxiety of seven sharps and double sharps. The environment that Strauss has placed on the orchestral musicians by writing in a visually and mentally challenging key adds to the intensity, anxiety, and high stakes of the scene. The

¹⁶ Udo Kultermann, “The Dance of the Seven Veils. Salome and Erotic Culture around 1900,” *Artibus et Historiae* 27, no. 53 (2006): 187.

uncomfortableness of reading in seven sharps plus numerous accidentals within the high tenor register adds a level of panic and angst while requiring the bassoon to maintain the calm, flowing style of the waltz.

Technique & Practice

The bassoon excerpt from the Salome's "Dance of the Seven Veils" is arguably one of the most demanding and challenging in terms of technique out of all the excerpts included in this pedagogical collection. The excerpt is in C# major and spans the tenor register between G#3 to C#4, which is an unkind combination of key signature and range. While this excerpt might be intimidating for younger bassoonists, there are a number of practice techniques that can prove helpful to learn this excerpt.

To increase comfortability in C# major, the C# key area should be incorporated into personal daily routine of scales including scales in thirds and fourths, arpeggios / broken chords, and long tones within all registers, especially focusing on the tenor register. As these key areas become more familiar and comfortable by means of daily routine, this will transfer to the study and development of the *Salome* excerpt.

When first approaching this excerpt, first focus on learning the note and fingering sequence. This can be done by focusing on the choreography of the fingers. The bassoon passage can be broken down into smaller practice fragments; each fragment (A, B, C, D) should be played rhythmically straight devoid of Strauss' written rhythm. The forward/backward practice technique has also proven to be an excellent practice tool to solidify technical execution.

Example 12.2: Practice Exercise (choreography, forward/backwards), Richard Strauss, Salome, bassoon I part, 4 bars before reh S to reh V

One fingering suggestion is to omit the whisper key on the F4 double-sharp two bars before rehearsal T allowing the left-hand thumb to hover over the A and C# speaker keys in prime position to press for the A#5. In the tenor register, there are a number of fingering options for many of the notes. Ultimately, the decision of which fingering to use comes down to each bassoonist's level of comfort and facility of the passage.

Once having returned to the excerpt as rhythmically printed, then the discussion of *tempo* and fluidity can begin. The use of practice rhythms can assist in speed development of getting from one fingering to the next. As the long, medium, and short note lengths within the practice rhythm exercises change as you invert each rhythm, it can help technical and mental development of the tricky passage.

As mentioned above, the entire orchestral set piece ranges from seven to nine minutes in length; the passage which includes the bassoon excerpt can have a range of *tempo* between 126-138 to the quarter

note.¹⁷ For speed development, the up10/down5 practice technique is quite helpful. While increasing *tempo* in practice, it's important to maintain relaxed fingers and hand position to stay nimble as you transition between the many awkward fingerings and intervals.

Sound Production

The bassoon passage is mostly within the middle and upper tenor register, necessitating the use of narrower vowels such as AY and EE, and the ability to quickly move between all vowel selections. For instance, the second triplet eighth note of bars 1 and 5 bars after rehearsal S should use an open syllable (OH) to help with the down slur, but quickly return to an AY syllable. With the use of various syllable preferences within this excerpt, be cognizant of where the back of the tongue is and the shape of the throat/glottis. In addition to the use of narrower vowels, intensity of air support and a forward rolling of the embouchure can also help facilitate the upper register: spinning air stream with engaged core/obliques in addition to an embouchure moved more closely to the first wire of the reed.

As there are not a lot of rest opportunities within the passage to rest the embouchure, it is important to keep an engaged soft cushioned embouchure with corners towards the nose. In extended tenor register passages, younger students will often turn to biting as their embouchure endurance is not fully developed. While biting should not be the building block of tenor register playing, the support the lips and embouchure experience from the teeth as can be useful. If/when biting or clamping of the embouchure happens, it would be preferable to stop practicing the passage to prevent the encouragement of a biting embouchure technique. With time as the young bassoonist develops and matures, so will the student's endurance capabilities to maintain a soft cushioned embouchure.

¹⁷ *Tempo* range noted is a composite range from the obtained audition packets as seen in Appendix 3.

Musical Gesture & Interpretation

As mentioned above, the bassoon passage is within a waltz style. While maintaining a straight quarter note pulse, the passage should be felt in one to help bring out the waltz feel. A waltz feeling comes alive with the impetus of beat 3 flowing to beat 1, we see this annotated by the air gestures and groups in the following Musical Map. There are a few instances where the rhythm provides moments of tension against the waltz movement. This can be seen in the metric hemiolas at 3 bars after rehearsal S and 5 bars before rehearsal V. In these hemiola moments, the dynamic crescendos both times help to bring out the tension before returning to a waltzing gesture.

Even in a brisk *tempo* range of quarter notes equals 126-138, all the small notes (triplet 8th notes, 16th notes, and 32nd notes) need to have rhythmic integrity while floating on the airstream to propel into the next beat. In general, the important notes are what comes after the brief two note gestures; keep this in mind so to not get or feel hindered technically moving through the little notes, use the air stream to blow through.

Even though the bassoon is joined by other instruments at various points in the phrases in unison, this passage often has difficulty to be heard through the thick orchestration. The *pp* and *p* dynamic directions should be observed with discretion depending on the resultant dynamic when in an orchestra. In personal practice, don't be afraid to challenge yourself to strive for the *pp* and *p* dynamic that Strauss directs, while maintaining ideal core bassoon sound, tone, color, and intonation.

When studying this excerpt, make sure to seek out several recordings especially for how each performance treats rehearsal T, and 2 bars after rehearsal U. Some performances will play these bars straight in time, others might stretch this bar a little to bring out the drama of arriving at *f* dynamic. Georg Solti with the Vienna Philharmonic, as listed here as a recording suggestion, does include a pull back on rehearsal T and 2 bars after rehearsal U.

espress.

pp

9

espress.

p

17

f

25

ritard.

dim. p

Suggested Listening & Viewing

Additional notable excerpts from *Salome, Op. 54*:

1. reh 58 to reh 61
2. 6 bars before reh 141 to bar 4 of reh 143
3. 3 bars after reh 353 for 3 bars

Contrabassoon

1. 6 bars before reh 141 to 10 bars after reh 143
2. 8 bars before reh 152 to 4 bars after 153
3. 5 bars before reh 255 to 5 bars after reh 255
4. 5 bars after reh 306 to 2 bars before reh 307

Chapter 13: PETER GRIMES

Peter Grimes (1945)

Music: Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Libretto: Montagu Slater (1902-1956)¹

Libretto based on George Crabbe's poem *The Borough*²
Through-composed Tragedy in English in Prologue and 3 Acts
Premiered: London, Sadler's Wells Theatre (June 7, 1945)³

Opera Synopsis

At an inquest, fisherman Peter Grimes explains that his apprentice died from exhaustion and dehydration while at sea.⁴ While the townsfolk remain biased and believe Grimes to be at fault, lawyer and coroner Swallow accepts Grimes' explanation and rules the boy's death an accident. Grimes is advised not to hire another young apprentice but rather to hire an experienced fisherman; Grimes protests this suggestion.⁵ The local schoolteacher Ellen, whom Grimes hopes to wed one day, tries to comfort Grimes.⁶

The Methodist fisherman Boles, the widow Mrs. Sedley, and retired merchant skipper Balstrode arrive at Auntie's pub, The Boar. As a storm approaches, Grimes calls for help to haul his boat to land; only Balstrode and Keene the apothecary help Grimes; Keene tells Grimes that he has found him a new apprentice named John; carrier Hobson refuses to fetch John until Ellen volunteers to go with him. As the storm continues to near, Balstrode tries to talk Grimes into leaving the village, which Grimes says he cannot until he makes enough money to marry Ellen.⁷ As the storm continues, the villagers gather at The

¹ Arthur Jacobs, "Slater Montagu," *Grove Music Online*, accessed December 8, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² Ibid.

³ Arnold Whittall, "Peter Grimes," *Grove Music Online*, accessed December 20, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "Peter Grimes," *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 485.

⁶ Arnold Whittall, "Peter Grimes," *Grove Music Online*, accessed December 20, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁷ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "Peter Grimes," *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 485.

Boar seeking shelter. When Grimes enters the pub, everyone goes silent, and Boles tries to attack Grimes stirring the beginnings of a riot; Keene sings a round to defuse the tension. Drenched from the storm, Hobson and Ellen arrive at The Boar with John, Grimes' new apprentice; Grimes takes John back into the storm and to his hut.

A few weeks later, Ellen notices bruising on John's neck and tears in his coat.⁸ Intending to go fishing and take the boy with him, Grimes is angered by Ellen's suggestion to take a day of rest; Grimes strikes Ellen. Villagers leaving the morning church service gossip about the interaction between Grimes and Ellen; Ellen unsuccessfully tries to justify Grimes' action arousing the men to rush to Grimes' hut. Grimes dreams about the life he had planned with Ellen and reflects on his dead apprentice when he hears the townsmen coming. Grimes races John out of the hut; John slips and falls down the cliff. The Rector and Swallow come upon Grimes in the hut and seeing that everything is clear, believe all is well; Balstrode having looked down the cliff, knows the truth.⁹

As the town is gathered at townhall for a dance, Mrs. Sedley tries to convince Keene that Grimes has murdered John, as no one has seen Grimes and John for days.¹⁰ Ellen and Balstrode arrive; Mrs. Sedley eavesdrops on their conversations and overhears that Grimes' boat has arrived. The crowd sets off to find Grimes. Grimes, in a fit of insanity over John's death, is found by Ellen and Balstrode who try to comfort him. Balstrode suggests that Grimes set sail on his boat and sink it to take his own life, Grimes takes Balstrode's suggestion. The next day begins in the village as if nothing has happened; hearing reports from the coastguard that boat has sunk, the villagers dismiss the news as a rumor.¹¹

⁸ Arnold Whittall, "Peter Grimes," *Grove Music Online*, accessed December 20, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "Peter Grimes," *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 485.

¹¹ Arnold Whittall, "Peter Grimes," *Grove Music Online*, accessed December 20, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Act I, Prologue: bars 1-5 (“Peter Grimes! Peter Grimes!”)

Scene Information

The town has gathered at the inquest to the death of William Spode, the apprentice of fisherman Peter Grimes. Without an orchestral overture introduction, the opera opens immediately upon the scene as heard with the bassoon excerpt.



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Example 13.1: Benjamin Britten, Peter Grimes, bassoon I part, bars 1-5

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

In the through composed Prologue, Britten uses an *arioso* style¹² which provides a clarity of articulated and syllabic libretto speech. This can be seen in Hobson and Swallow's entrance beginning at

¹² Ibid.

bar 5, where the libretto remains on one note and each syllable gets its own note length. The Prologue consists of two conflicting tonal centers, Bb and A.¹³ The bassoon excerpt begins on Bb1 and ends on A3, bookends which highlight the two key tonal areas.

Libretto¹⁴

SWALLOW

Peter Grimes! Peter Grimes! Peter Grimes!

Peter Grimes, we are here to investigate the cause of your apprentice William Spode,
Whose body you brought ashore from your boat, "The Boy Billy,"

On the twenty-sixth, ultimo.

The opera's opening bassoon excerpt, heard in unison with other woodwind instruments such as clarinet, oboes, contrabassoon, and flutes, provides the rural and folk atmosphere for the fishing village where the opera takes place. Reappearing throughout the prologue, this opening tune can be viewed as a "warning" motive which sets the tone for the opera's plot. Set to this "warning" motive, the lawyer Swallow advises Grimes to hire a grown man, rather than a boy, as his next apprentice.

Libretto¹⁵

SWALLOW

Peter Grimes, I hear advise you!

Do not get another boy apprentice.

Get a fisherman to help you,
big enough to stand up for himself.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Benjamin Britten, *Peter Grimes: An Opera in Three Acts and a Prologue Derived from the Poem of George Crabbe: Op. 33*, libretto by Montagu Slater (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1963), 1-2.

¹⁵ Benjamin Britten, *Peter Grimes: An Opera in Three Acts and a Prologue Derived from the Poem of George Crabbe: Op. 33*, libretto by Montagu Slater (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1963), 15.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

1.2
Hn. in F

3.4

Tr. 1, 2
in C

1.2
Tbn.

3
Tuba

Timp.

Sw.

Do not get an-oth-er boy ap-pren-tice. Get a fisherman to help you, big enough to stand up— for himself.

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Example 13.2: Benjamin Britten, Peter Grimes, full score, from Prologue, 8 bars after reh 6

The Prologue closes on the “warning” motive, heard in the oboe, clarinet, and bassoon cementing the tone for the opera.

Technique & Sound Production

The five-bar excerpt spans just shy of two full octaves, from Bb/A#1 to A3, and can be executed with the register lock engaged for the full passage. The passage incorporates the dual tonal areas of Bb and A as noticed by the flat accidentals through the downbeat of bar 4, and the sharp accidentals from bar 4 to the downbeat of bar 5.

While Britten directs that the passage is to maintain a quarter note pulse of 100, many recordings/performances maintain quicker *tempos* upwards of 112. At such an energetic *tempo*, this low register articulated passage can prove to have some challenges but also provides an opportunity to discuss low register and articulation technique development. The use of practice rhythms and up10/down5 are a few suggestions of where to start in learning notes and speed development.

In general, when playing in the low register less reed within the mouth can help ease of low articulations. The closer the embouchure is to the first wire, the more effort it takes for the airstream and tongue to get the reed vibrating. The closer the embouchure is to the tip of the reed, with as little blade of the reed as appropriate, the reed can vibrate more freely and respond easier. One caveat is that in playing very close to the tip of the reed, the resultant sound might be more nasal, bright, and thinner, devoid of core. This can be combated by using a darker reed, rounding out the embouchure, lowering the back of the tongue, using an OH syllable, and adding more lip surface area.

With such a quick *staccato* passage, attention should be given to the jaw and tonguing motion. While it might be easier to produce low register short notes by releasing the jaw hinge, by doing so this

motion takes energy and air flow away from the core sound. When first learning this passage, slurring the passage while looking in a mirror to focus on air flow and to view the face, chin, jaw, and embouchure intentions are a good means to ensure proper jaw and embouchure within the low register. Feeling and seeing this setup becomes a foundation for when the *staccato* articulation is reincorporated. When bassoonists are ready to reintroduce articulation, a stopped *staccato* articulation would be an appropriate *staccato* type for this excerpt. The articulation can only be successful with engaged obliques, using several layers of engagement building on one another between the eighth note and sixteenth note gestures.

Musical Gesture and Pacing

As mentioned above, the opening excerpt maintains a pace of quarter note equals 100 as Britten notates, or perhaps even a few clicks quicker. A rather technical passage, using the contour of the line and the provided note groupings is a great foundation for musical trajectory.

Bassoonists can, and probably should, play into the bouncy nature of the instrument and passage, even while using a stopped *staccato* articulation. A stopped *staccato* can be bouncy and playful when the end of one note is the start of the next by articulating on the air and gesturing up to each eighth note (as shown in musical map bars 2-4).

The first Bb1 in bar 1 can have some weight and length, as noted by the *tenuto* mark, while the other notes in bar 1 should be a bit more clipped with the last D2 acting like a lifted “stinger.” The bars 2-5 should be a gradual build using the eighth notes as lifted points, which can provide an opportunity to grab quick breaths, if needed. A breath, or engagement break, between Fb2 and A31 in bar 4 should probably be avoided. Keeping airstream and abdominal support engaged will help make this large downward leap.

Moderato ma energico ♩ = 100

f *stacc.* *cresc.* *ff*

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Example 13.3: Musical Map, Benjamin Britten, *Peter Grimes*, bassoon I part, bars 1-5

Suggested Listening & Viewing

- Britten, Benjamin. *Peter Grimes*. Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and Choirs, Edward Gardner. Recorded November 2019, Grieghallen, Bergen, Norway. Chandos, September 2020, compact discs.
- . *Peter Grimes*. Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Bernard Haitink. With Thomas Allen, Maria Bovino, George Crabbe, Stafford Dean, Neil Jenkins, et al. Recorded June 1, 1992, Watford Town Hall. Alexander Street: EMI Classics, 2005, Audio Stream.
- . *Peter Grimes*. London Symphony Chorus, London Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis. With Montagu Slater, Glenn Winslade, Janice Watson, Anthony Michaels-Moore, Catherine Wyn-Rogers, Jill Grove. Recorded live Jan. 10-12, 2004, Barbican, London. LSO Live LSO0054, 2004, compact discs.
- . *Peter Grimes*. The Metropolitan Opera, Donald Runnicles. Performed March 15, 2008. The MET Opera On Demand, Recorded Broadcast, 2008. Video Stream, 168 min.
- . *Peter Grimes* Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Sir Peter Pears. Recorded December 2, 1958. DECCA 4830401, rereleased 2016, compact discs

Additional notable excerpt from *Peter Grimes*

1. Remainder of Prologue.

Chapter 14: THE RAKE'S PROGRESS

The Rake's Progress (1947-1951)

Music: Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Libretto: W.H. Auden (1907-1973) and Chester Kallman (1921-1975)

Inspired by *A Rake's Progress* (1724-1732), a series of eight paintings by William Hogarth¹

Opera in English in 3 Acts and epilogue

Premiered: La Fencie, Venice (co-production with La Scala, Milan)² (September 11, 1951)³

Opera Synopsis

In the English countryside, engaged couple Tom Rakewell and Anne Trulove are celebrating their love. Apprehensive of the match, Father Trulove has arranged a job for Tom in the city which Tom declines longing for an easier path to riches.⁴ Nick Shadow appears informing Tom that he has inherited a significant amount of money from a long-lost uncle. Tom agrees to employ Shadow for a year and a day; together they depart for London to sort out the inheritance paperwork.⁵ As he leaves, Tom tells Anne that he will send for her soon. Shadow announces that “the progress of a rake begins.”⁶ In London, Shadow introduces Tom to Mother Goose's brothel, where the roaring-boys and whores cavort.⁷ Mother Goose and Shadow ask Tom about love and Tom's thoughts turn to Anne.⁸ Tom tries to leave the brothel, but Shadow convinces him to stay by turning back the clock. Tom continues to drink and sings a moving song; Mother Goose invites Tom to spend the night with her which Tom accepts.⁹ Back in the

¹ Nicholas Ivar Martin, “The Rake's Progress,” *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 515.

² Stephen Walsh, “Igor Stravinsky,” ed. Deane Root, accessed June 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³ Richard Taruskin, “The Rake's Progress,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁴ “The Rake's Progress,” Boosey and Hawkes, accessed January 12, 2021, <https://www.boosey.com/opera/moreDetails?musicID=4670>

⁵ Nicholas Ivar Martin, “The Rake's Progress,” *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 516.

⁶ Igor Stravinsky, *The Rake's Progress*, libretto by W. H. Auden, and Chester Kallman, (London: Boosey & Hawkes), 57.

⁷ Nicholas Ivar Martin, “The Rake's Progress,” *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 516.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 516.

⁹ Richard Taruskin, “The Rake's Progress,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

countryside, not having heard from Tom and fearing the worst, Anne decides to go to London to rescue him.¹⁰

Bored with city life, Tom longs to be happy, and upon suggestion from Shadow, Tom marries Baba the Turk the famous bearded lady.¹¹ Anne arrives in London to find Tom; Tom begs Anne to leave telling her that he is not worthy of her love, and that he is married.¹² In the next scene during breakfast, Baba is talking away at Tom, frustrated by his coldness Baba throws a temper tantrum. Tom is able to silence Baba by placing a wig over her head.¹³ An exhausted Tom goes to sleep and dreams about a machine that can turn stone into bread.¹⁴ When Tom awakes, he finds Shadow standing in front of him with such a machine.¹⁵

The machine was a sham and has left Tom in financial ruin forcing him to sell his property, including Baba. Baba abandons Tom and advises Anne to go to him.¹⁶ Now a year and a day from meeting, Shadow takes Tom to a graveyard to call in his payment. Revealing himself as the devil, Shadow doesn't want money but instead Tom's soul as payment. Wanting to make a game out of the payment, Shadow and Tom play a game of cards, and with help from Anne's voice Tom wins. Having lost, Shadow sinks into Hell, but first condemns Tom to a life of insanity; Tom, believing himself to be Adonis, is locked up in the insane asylum Bedlam. Anne visits Tom and he believes she is Venus and asks for her forgiveness.¹⁷ Anne comforts and sings Tom to sleep. Tom awakens to find Anne gone.¹⁸

¹⁰ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "The Rake's Progress," *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 516.

¹¹ Richard Taruskin, "The Rake's Progress," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Nicholas Ivar Martin, "The Rake's Progress," *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 516.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 516.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 516.

¹⁶ Richard Taruskin, "The Rake's Progress," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

In the epilogue, the main characters explain the moral of the opera, “for idle hands, and hearts and minds, the Devil finds a work to do.”¹⁹

Act I, Sc. 3 Aria (“Quietly night”): reh 183 to 4 bars after reh 189

Scene Information

Act I scene 3 is a two-part *scena* set in the countryside that opens with a reed trio introduction to Anne’s *recitative*, “No word from Tom.”²⁰ It is here in the *recitative* that Anne wonders why she has not heard from Tom since he left for London with Shadow. Anne refuses to take Tom’s silence to mean that he has rejected her.²¹ Anne is torn between her concern for Tom and her desire to go after him, and the decision to stay in the country to care for her father. In the aria, “Quietly Night,” Anne calls on the night to care for Tom and on the moon to guide her to him, along with the *obbligato* bassoon in free canon based on Anne’s melodic line.²²

¹⁹ Nicholas Ivar Martin, “The Rake’s Progress,” *The Opera Manual* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2014), 516.

²⁰ Richard Taruskin, “The Rake’s Progress,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed June 2, 2020, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Paul Griffiths, *Igor Stravinsky*, (England: Cambridge Press, 1982), 36.

183 $\text{♩} = 112 - 108$
 Anne
 Qui et - ly, night, O find him and
 Bsn. I Solo
dolce - lamentevole

184
 ca - ress, And may thou qui et find his heart, al though

185
 it be un - kind, Nor may its beat con - fess,
 Al though I weep, al though I weep, al

186
 though I weep, it knows, it knows of lone li - ness.

187 *poco rubato*
 Guide me, O moon, chaste - ly when I de - part, And
 Solo
come sopra

188
 warm - ly be the same He wat - ches with - out grief or shame; It can
 not, can - not be thou art. A
tranquillo

189 *Molto meno mosso* $\text{♩} = 58$
espress.
 col - der moon, a col - der moon u - pon a col - der heart.
 + Fls.
p *p* *pp*

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**Example 14.1: Igor Stravinsky, *The Rake’s Progress*, bassoon I part, Act I, Sc. 3 (“Quietly night”),
reh 183 to 4 bars after reh 189**

Libretto²³

ANNE

Quietly, night
O find him and caress,
And may thou quiet find his heart, although it be unkind
Nor may its beat confess,
Although I weep, it knows, it knows of loneliness.

Guide me, O moon, chastely when I depart,
And warmly be the same He watches without grief or shame;
It cannot, cannot be thou art.
A colder moon, a colder moon upon a colder heart.

Pedagogy & Performance

Musical Connection

Unaccepting of the notion that Tom has forgotten about her, Anne is concerned that he is in trouble but struggles with the decision to leave her father in the countryside to go to London. The *aria* is in B minor, and the string accompaniment musically represents and supports the struggle and sadness that Anne feels. The strings maintain a similar chordal, rhythmic *ostinato* throughout the *aria*: the lower strings providing a foundation of changing notes on eighth notes 1 and 4, and the upper strings playing incessant off-beat sixteenth notes. The string accompaniment provides an eerie, forlorn foundation beneath Anne and the bassoon.

²³ Igor Stravinsky, *The Rake’s Progress*, libretto by W. H Auden, and Chester Kallman, (London: Boosey & Hawkes), 114-117.

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Example 14.2: Igor Stravinsky, *The Rake’s Progress*, full score, Act I, Sc. 3 (“Quietly night”), reh 183 for 4 bars

The bassoon line is an *obligato* free canon, not an exact imitation to what Anne sings. The compositional technique provides what can only be described as written out echo: Anne calls out to the night to find and caress Tom’s heart,²⁴ and the bassoon line being offset by a measure plus two eighth notes (bar 3) or three eighth notes (reh 187) provides the night sky’s sonic reflection of Anne’s pleas.

Technique

A somewhat technically challenging excerpt, the bassoon part spans about two and a half octaves between D2 and B4 in B minor with a few accidentals. This excerpt provides opportunities to discuss fingering cleanliness and smoothness between all intervals, as well as facilitation of large interval leaps (articulated and slurred). Choreography of the fingers is a great exercise to help focus on the timing of each note and fingering change, but also can be a tool to practice and focus on the implementation of

²⁴ Igor Stravinsky, *The Rake’s Progress*, libretto by W. H Auden, and Chester Kallman, (London: Boosey & Hawkes), 114.

gestures and voicings that will help in execution. (More about voicings and gestures in the respective Sound Production and Musical Gesture sections.)

Evenness and smoothness of technique and tone quality are essential to not take away from the *scena*'s emotion. For bassoonists whose standard fingering for F#3 is the front/pinky, it might be a good decision to instead use the back F#3 in cases where the note is followed by G#3-A#3 to reduce the amount of keywork sliding. For this fingering pattern, it is important to work out the thumb-pinky-thumb timing so not to produce a blip in between the notes. Depending on setup, reed, embouchure, voicing, etc., bassoonists will need to decide which finger options of certain tenor register notes will be best, e.g., Bb or front F#4; G key or Full A4; Full or short C#4; and R23 or R13 for when slurring to E4. Smoothness of technique is paramount over loyalty to a particular finger.

Sound Production

With the persistent rhythmic motor in the strings, opportunities for *rubato* as a chance to catch a breath are not possible. A BSG plan will be vital and helpful, especially in the first half of the excerpt through bar 2 after rehearsal 186.

This excerpt has a quite a number of large interval leaps, up and down, where the choreography of the fingers exercise could not only help note-pattern learning and retention, but also provide an opportunity to experiment and practice vowel voicings. Slow intentional movement between two notes allows for the conscious employment of a particular voicing. Below is an example of the choreography of the fingers as applied to voicings beginning two bars before rehearsal 185 to two bars after rehearsal 186.



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Example 14.3: Practice Exercise (voicings), Igor Stravinsky, *The Rake’s Progress*, bassoon I part, 2 bars before reh 185 to 2 bars after reh 186

Smoothness of line is not only achieved by technical facility as mentioned above, but also with air flow intention and direction. Engagement of multilevel oblique support coupled with air speed and voicing can help provide sonic smoothness and musical trajectory. While a *legato* direction is not written in the part, it can be inferred by the ample use of slur markings. Using the Italian translation of *legato*, meaning “bound,” is a more exact descriptive definition to influence the type of air stream necessary for smoothness. Each note is bound to the one previous and the one after: the boundness comes how one note ends and is then handed off to the next, maintaining air stream and oblique intent and intensity, devoid of sonic decay between the start of each note, the sound in between.

Musical Gesture

Stravinsky does not provide a written dynamic for the soprano and bassoon lines in the main material of “Quietly night;” the first dynamic seen in the bassoon is after rehearsal 189 as the orchestra

transitions to the following *recitative*.²⁵ While basically a duo, the bassoon is a free canon of Anne's line. The bassoon should be mindful and dynamically sensitive of the soprano on the stage. However, there are moments where the bassoon can and should have more prominence. In general, these are moments where Stravinsky has orchestrated space in the texture for the bassoon line to have quick gestures or material in response to what the soprano line has just done, to ornament the voice line, or at moments when the soprano is holding a note or concluding a phrase (for example: bars 2-4 after reh 183, 4 bars before reh 185, and bars 3-6 after reh 188). These moments of interplay between Anne and bassoon evoke the echo effect.

As a bassoonist develops clean technique and desirable vowel voicings within this excerpt, there also needs to be a musical trajectory. Note groupings along with air stream engagement, and moments of when the bassoon can ebb and flow with the vocal line provide a narrative arc that supports and complements Anne but also aids a bassoonist's execution of the passage. Recognizing that the musical gesture and line will be predicated based on that a specific soprano will do, there could be any number of musical map ideas.

²⁵ Igor Stravinsky, *The Rake's Progress*, libretto by W. H. Auden, and Chester Kallman, (London: Boosey & Hawkes), 114-117.

183 $\text{♩} = 112-108$ *Solo* *dolce-lamentevole* 184

185

186 3

187 *Solo* *come sopra* 188

poco rubato

189 *Molto meno mosso* $\text{♩} = 58$ *p* *p* *pp*

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Example 14.4: Musical Map, Igor Stravinsky, The Rake’s Progress, bassoon I part, Act I, Sc. 3 (“Quietly night”), reh 183 to 4 bars after reh 189

Suggested Listening/Viewing

- Stravinsky, Igor. *The Rake's Progress*. Brian Large, director. Sylvain Cambreling, conductor. With Camerata Academica and Vienna State Opera Chorus. Recorded at the Salzburg Festival (Vienna). ArtHaus Musik, 1996. Alexander Street on Demand Online, 156 minutes.
- . *The Rake's Progress*. Chœur et Orchestre de l'Opéra de Lyon, Kent Nagano. With Dawn Upshaw, Grace Bumbry, Anne Collins, Jerry Hadley, et al. Recorded July 1995 and March 1996, Opéra de Lyon. Paris: Erato, 1996, compact discs.
- . *The Rake's Progress*. London Philharmonic, Vladimir Jurowski. With Miah Persson, Topi Lehtipuu, Clive Bayley, Matthew Rose, et al. Performed at Glyndebourne, Festival (LewesGreat Britain), 2010. Medici TV, Recorded Broadcast On Demand, 2010, 139 minutes.
- . *The Rake's Progress*. London Symphony Orchestra, Monteverdi Choir, John Eliot Gardiner. With Deborah York, Anne Sofie von Otter, Anne Howells, Ian Bostridge, et al. Recorded Abbey Road Studios, London, June 1997. Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 1999
- . *The Rake's Progress*. The Metropolitan Opera and Chorus, James Levine. With Dawn Upshaw, Stephanie Blythe, Jane Shaulis, Paul Groves, et al. Live Broadcast from the Metropolitan Opera House, New York City, April 19, 2003. Metropolitan Opera, 2010, compact discs.

Additional notable excerpts from *The Rake's Progress*

1. Act I, Recitative and Scene (Shadow, Rakewell, and Mother Goose): reh 132 to reh 136
2. Act I, Chorus (Roaring Boys and Whores): reh 145 through second ending
3. Act I: Reed trio before recitative "No Words from Tom": reh 177 to reh 180

Chapter 15: CONCLUSIONS & WHAT'S NEXT

Ten excerpts do not even begin to crack into the world of prominent bassoon excerpts or passages of the opera genre. However, it is a starting point. This collection provides a central location of resources – opera details, synopsis, access to bassoon excerpt part, pedagogical and performance discussion, and suggestions for further discovery – for bassoonists as they begin to study opera. A central location like this provides a meeting point for the bassoonist-scholar.

Throughout my research and investigation, there are several areas where this project can grow and expand in terms of the opera passages: inclusion of a greater variety of operas, composers, time periods, and opera styles. An adjacent area of research, one that I am greatly interested in, is Baroque opera's influence on bassoon instrument development, and the evolution of the bassoon's role within opera throughout the genre.

It is my sincere hope to continue to develop this project and to bring a new excerpt resource, one devoted to only opera excerpts, into fruition. In the meantime, I hope the bassoon community embraces this new collection's humble beginnings and finds this resource valuable and helpful.

Appendix 1: Existing Excerpt Collections with Opera Totals & Percentages

Editor/Publisher	Collection Title	Publication Year	Opera	Total	Percentage
Albert	Orchestral Studies from Operas and Concert Works	1947	10	13	76.92%
Angerhofer	Orchesterstudien für Fagott. Heft 10. Russische und Sowjetische Meister	1962	1	16	6.25%
Boehm	Richard Strauss: Orchesterstudien aus den Symphonischen Werken für Fagott und Kontrafagott	1910	0	7	0.00%
Bolfan	Orkestarske Studije za Fagot	1980	6	26	23.08%
Degen / Bocal Music	Orchestral Passages for Bassoon from the Concertos of Mozart and Beethoveen (Vol. 1)	1994	0	25	0.00%
Degen / Bocal Music	Orchestral Passages for Bassoon (from the Concertos of Berlioz, Brahms, Chopin, Haydn, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Moscheles, Paganini, Schumann, Spohr, Vieuxtemps, Viotti, Weber, and Wieniawsky) (Vol. 2)	1994	0	29	0.00%
Degen / Bocal Music	Orchestral Passages for Bassoon: Late 19th and Early 20th Century Concertos (Vol. 3)	1994	0	23	0.00%
Dherin	Traits Difficiles. Tires d'ouvres symphoniques et dramatiques Volumes 1-11	1948-1954	26	81	32.10%
Friedrich Hofmeister Musikverlag / Raimund Mages	Orchesterstudien für Fagott: Wagner (3 parts)	ca. 1998	10	10	100.00%
Gardner	Bassoon Passages from the Nutcracker Ballet by Peter Ilvich Tchaikovsky	1998	0	1	0.00%
Gumbert	Orchesterstudien für Fagott Eine Sammlung schwieriger Stellen aus Symphonien und andern Werken. Heft I and II	n.d.	9	42	21.43%
Gumbert / Wiegand	Orchesterstudien für Fagott Eine Sammlung schwieriger Stellen aus Symphonien und andern Werken. Heft I	ca. 1900	2	15	13.33%
Gumbert / Wiegand / Knochenhauer	Orchesterstudien für Fagott von Gumbert-Wiegand. Heft II	ca. 1930	11	27	40.74%
Iconis / Ricordi	Il Controfagotto: Storia e tecnica ("The Contrabassoon: History and technique")	2009	25	123	20.33%
Junge	Fagott-Studien, Vol. 1 and 2, and Orchesterstudien für Fagott Heft I, III, IV	vol. 1 and 2: 1938 Heft I, III, IV: 1954-6	32	64	50.00%
Kessler	Bassoon Passages Books I and II	1947	3	26	11.54%
Kolbinger & Rinderspacher / CF Peters	Orchester Probespiel, Fagott/Kontrafagott (CD and Print editions available)	Print: 1992	14	43	32.56%

Morelli / Boosey & Hawkes	Igor Stravinsky: Difficult Passages for the Bassoon and Contrabassoon	1994	6	43	13.95%
Neklyudov	Orkestrovyye trudnosti dlia fagota. Tetradi I-V / Zarubzhnye klassiki	Tetrad I: 1960; Tetrad II: 1961; Tetrad III: 1963; Tetrad IV: 1965 Tetrad V: 1971	15	158	9.49%
Pezzi	Peter I. Tchaikovsky Orchestra Studies for Bassoon	1948	0	11	0.00%
Piesk	Beethoven Werke außer Sinfonien (vol. 2)	1984	4	20	20.00%
Piesk	Orchesterstudien: Beethoven Sinfonien (vol. 1)	1982	0	9	0.00%
Piesk	Orchesterstudien: Fagott: Mahler	1993	0	11	0.00%
Piesk	Orchesterstudien: Fagott: Mozart Opern	1993	5	5	100.00%
Piesk	Orchesterstudien: Fagott: Mozart Sinfonien, Serenaden, Divertimentim Chorwerke	1993	0	21	0.00%
Piesk	Orchesterstudien: Fagott: Mozart Konzerte	1993	0	19	0.00%
Popov / Zimmerman (Germany)	Orchesterstudien: Fagott: Tchaikowsky Werke außer Ballette und Opern	1993	0	25	0.00%
Righini	Il Fagotto in Orchestra	1971	80	205	39.02%
Saveliev	Orkestrovyye trudnosti dlia fagota	1964	0	6	0.00%
Schoenbach	Twentieth Century Orchestra Studies for Bassoon	1970	4	52	7.69%
Schottstadt Verlag / Rainer Schottstadt	Bach Orchestral Studies	n.d.	0	unk.	0.00%
Schubert, Y.	Orkestrovyye trudnosti dlia fagota. Tchaikowsky Ballet and Opera, 1 and 2 Bassoons	1952	6	9	66.67%
Seith, Hans Rudolph / Breitkopf und Haertel (Germany)	Orchestra Excerpts for Contrabassoon (Edition 6471)	1965	19	58	32.76%
Siebach: Bach Cantatas	Bach-Studien für Violoncello-KontraB-Fagott Heft I und II	1967	0	71	0.00%
Siebach: Bach, Overture, Brandenburg	Studien für tiefe Instrumente nach Instrumente-Baßstimmen aus Werken Johann Sebastian Bach	1958	0	10	0.00%
Siebach: Handel	Handel-Studien für tiefe Instrumente	1959	5	5	100.00%
Stadio / Ricordi	Passi Difficili e "A Solo" per Fagotto	1932; 1954, 1992	52	110	47.27%

Turkovic / Universal Edition (Austria)	Schoenberg-Berg-Webern, Orchesterstudien für Fagott	c. 2000	2	15	13.33%
Van Gansbeke	The Orchestral Bassoon	diss. 2012; online 2019	6	59	10.17%
Weller	Orchesterstudien für Fagott, volumes I-VI	1909	3	28	10.71%
Weller, Curt / Belwin Mills	Orchesterstudien für Fagott, volumes I-VI	n.d.	7	61	11.48%
Werner Seltmann & Günter Angerhöfer / Schott	Fagott-Schule in sechs Bänden (Das Fagott); Vol. 6: Das Kontrafagott	1982	26	74	35.14%
Zakharov	Orkestrovyye trudnosti dlia fagota	n.d.	0	34	0.00%
Zverev	Orkestrovyye trudnosti dlia fagota	1953	0	21	0.00%

Appendix 2: Frequency of Operatic Titles Included in Existing Excerpt Collections

Composer	Opera	Count
Adam, Adolphe	Le Postillon v. Longjumeau (The Postilion of Lonjumeau)	2
Auber, Daniel Francois Espirt	Masaniello (La Muette de Portici; Die Stumme von Portici)	3
Bachelet, Alfred	Scemo	1
Beethoven, Ludwig van	Fidelio, Op. 72	11
Beethoven, Ludwig van	Leonora Ov. 1, Op. 138	1
Beethoven, Ludwig van	Leonora Ov. 2, Op. 72a	1
Beethoven, Ludwig van	Leonora Ov. 3, Op. 72	12
Berg, Alban	Lulu	5
Berg, Alban	Wozzeck, Op. 7	5
Berlioz, Hector	Benvenuto Cellini	1
Bizet, Georges	Carmen	4
Bizet, Georges	La Jolie Fille de Perth	1
Boieldieu, François-Adrien	Le Dame Blanche (Die Wiese Dame)	4
Boito, Arrigo	Mefistofele (Mephistopheles)	2
Borodin, Alexander	Prince Igor, incl. Polovitsian Dances	2
Britten, Benjamin	Peter Grimes	2
Busoni, Ferruccio	Doktor Faust (Doctor Faust)	2
Catalani, Alfredo	La Wally	2
Charpentier, Gustave	Louise	1
Cherubini, Luigi	Anacréon, ou L'amour fugitif	4
Cherubini, Luigi	Der Wasserträger (The Water Carrier)	2
Cherubini, Luigi	Lodoiska	2
Cherubini, Luigi	Medea	1
Cilea, Francesco	Adriana Lecoureur	2
Donizetti, Gaetano	Don Pasquale	2
Donizetti, Gaetano	L'elisir d'amore (The Elixir of Love; Der Lieberstrank)	5
Donizetti, Gaetano	La Favorita (The Favorite)	2
Dukas, Paul	Ariane et Barbe Bleue	1
Enescu, George	Edipo, Op. 23	3
Fauré, Gabriel	Pénélope	1
Giordano, Umberto	Andrea Chénier	2
Giordano, Umberto	Fedora	2
Giordano, Umberto	Mese Mariano	1
Gounod, Charles	Mireille	1
Händel, Georg Friederich	Agrippina	1
Händel, Georg Friederich	Giulio Cesare (Julius Cesar)	1
Händel, Georg Friederich	Ottone	1

Händel, Georg Friederich	Radamisto	1
Händel, Georg Friederich	Rinaldo	1
Henze, Hans Werner	Das Wundertheater	1
Henze, Hans Werner	König Hirsch (The Stag King)	1
Hindemith, Paul	Cardillac, Op. 39	2
Hindemith, Paul	Die Harmonie der Welt	1
Hindemith, Paul	Neues vom Tage (News of the Day)	1
Janáček, Leoš	Die Sache Makropulos (The Makropoulos Affair)	2
Janáček, Leoš	The Cunning Little Vixen (Příhody lišky Bystroušky; Das schlaue Fuchselein)	2
Leoncavallo, Ruggero	Paillasse (Pagliacci; The Clowns)	4
Liviabella, Lino	Antigone	1
Lortzing, Albert	Czar un Zimmermann	3
Lortzing, Albert	Der Waffenschmied	1
Lortzing, Albert	Der Wildschütz (The Poacher)	1
Mascagni, Pietro	Amico Fritz	1
Mascagni, Pietro	Cavaleria Rusticana	2
Mascagni, Pietro	Iris	2
Mascagni, Pietro	La maschere	1
Massenet, Jules	Manon	1
Messenger, André	Fortunio	1
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	Così fan tutte, K. 588	6
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	Der Entführung aus dem Serail, K. 384 (The Abduction from the Seraglio)	1
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	Die Zauberflöte, K. 620 (The Magic Flute)	10
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	Don Giovanni, K. 527	3
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	Idomeneo, K. 366	1
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	La Finta Giardiniera, K. 51 (The Pretend Gardener)	1
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	Le Nozze di Figaro, K. 492 (The Marriage of Figaro)	9
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus	Zaide, K. 344	1
Mussorgsky, Modest	La fiera di Sorcinsky	1
Nicolai, Otto	Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor (The Merry Wives of Windsor)	1
Paisiello, Giovanni	Nina, o sia La pazza per amore (Nina, or the Girl Drive Mad by Love)	2
Pizzetti, Ildebrando	Debora e Jaele	2
Ponchielli, Amilcare	La Gioconda (The Joyful Girl)	2
Prokofiev, Sergei	The Love for Three Oranges, Op. 33 (L'amour des trois oranges)	4
Puccini, Giacomo	Gianni Schicchi	2
Puccini, Giacomo	Il Tabarro (The Cloak)	2
Puccini, Giacomo	La Bohème	2
Puccini, Giacomo	La Fanciulla del West (The Girl of the Golden West)	2
Puccini, Giacomo	Madame Butterfly	3
Puccini, Giacomo	Suor Angelica (Sister Angelica)	2
Puccini, Giacomo	Tosca	3

Puccini, Giacomo	Turandot	2
Rabaud, Henri	Mârouf	1
Ravel, Maurice	L'Enfant et les Sortilèges (The Child and the Spells)	5
Ravel, Maurice	L'Heure Espagnole (The Spanish Hour)	3
Respighi, Ottorino	Belfagor	1
Riccitelli, Primo	I Compagnacci	2
Rocca, Lodovico	Il Dibuk	1
Rossini, Gioachino	Guillaume Tell (William Tell)	1
Rossini, Gioachino	Il Barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville)	1
Rossini, Gioachino	L'Assedio di Corinto	1
Rossini, Gioachino	L'Italiana in Algeri (The Italian Girl in Algiers)	2
Rossini, Gioachino	La Cambiali di Matrimonio	2
Rossini, Gioachino	La Centerentola (Cinderella)	2
Rossini, Gioachino	La Gazza Ladra (The Thieving Magpie; Die Diebische Elster)	1
Rossini, Gioachino	La Scala di seta	1
Rossini, Gioachino	Semiramide	1
Rossini, Gioachino	Tancredi	2
Salieri, Antonio	Annibale in Capua	1
Schönberg, Arnold	Die Erwartung, Op. 17 (Expectation)	2
Schönberg, Arnold	Die glückliche Hand (The Lucky Hand)	3
Schönberg, Arnold	Moses und Aron	2
Schumann, Robert	Genoveva, Op. 81	1
Shostakovich, Dmitri	Katerina Ismailova (Lady MacBeth of the Mtsensk District)	3
Smetana, Bedřich	The Bartered Bride (Prodaná Nevěsta)	5
Spontini, Gaspare	La Vestale (The Vestal)	2
Strauss, Richard	Arabella	3
Strauss, Richard	Capriccio, Op. 85	2
Strauss, Richard	Daphne	2
Strauss, Richard	Der Rosenkavalier, Op. 59 (The Cavalier of the Rose)	3
Strauss, Richard	Die Ägyptische Helena (The Egyptian Helen)	2
Strauss, Richard	Die Frau ohne Schatten, Op. 65 (The Woman without a Shadow)	3
Strauss, Richard	Die schweigsame Frau, Op. 80 (The Silent Woman)	2
Strauss, Richard	Elektra	3
Strauss, Richard	Salome	4
Stravinsky, Igor	Le Rossignol	1
Stravinsky, Igor	Mavra	1
Stravinsky, Igor	Oedipus Rex	1
Stravinsky, Igor	Persephone	1
Stravinsky, Igor	Renard	1
Stravinsky, Igor	The Flood	1
Stravinsky, Igor	The Rake's Progress	1

Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich	Charodeyka (The Enchantress)	1
Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich	Cherevichsky (The Slippers)	1
Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich	Eugene Onegin	2
Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich	Iolanta	1
Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich	Mazepa	1
Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich	Pique Dame, Op. 68 (The Queen of Spades)	2
Testi, Flavio	La Celestina	1
Thomas, Ambroise	Mignon	1
Verdi, Giuseppe	Aïda	5
Verdi, Giuseppe	Don Carlo	4
Verdi, Giuseppe	Falstaff	3
Verdi, Giuseppe	Il Trovatore (The Troubadour; Der Troubador)	1
Verdi, Giuseppe	La Forza del Destino (The Force of Destiny)	3
Verdi, Giuseppe	La Traviata (The Fallen Woman)	4
Verdi, Giuseppe	Les vêpres siciliennes (The Sicilian Vespers)	3
Verdi, Giuseppe	Otello	5
Verdi, Giuseppe	Rigoletto	4
Verdi, Giuseppe	Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)	4
Veretti, Antonio	Burlesca	1
Wagner, Richard	Abu Hassan	2
Wagner, Richard	Das Rheingold (The Rhinegold)	4
Wagner, Richard	Der Fliegende Holländer (The Flying Dutchman)	3
Wagner, Richard	Der Freischütz (The Free Shooter)	6
Wagner, Richard	Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (The Meistersinger of Nuremberg)	8
Wagner, Richard	Die Walküre	5
Wagner, Richard	Euryanthe	6
Wagner, Richard	Götterdämmerung (The Twilight of the Gods)	3
Wagner, Richard	La Fate (Die Feen; The Fairies)	1
Wagner, Richard	Lohengrin	4
Wagner, Richard	Oberon	2
Wagner, Richard	Parsifal	4
Wagner, Richard	Rienzi	3
Wagner, Richard	Ring of the Nibelung	2
Wagner, Richard	Tannhäuser	6
Wagner, Richard	Tristan and Isolde	4
Weinberger, Jaromír	Schwanda the Bagpiper (Švanda Dudák)	1
Wolf-Ferrari, Ermanno	I Quattro Rusteghi (The Four Rustics)	2
Wolf-Ferrari, Ermanno	Il Segreto di Susanna (Susanna's Secret)	2
Zandonai, Riccardo	Francesca da Rimini	2

Total No. Different Works: 158
Total No. Different Composers: 63

Appendix 3: Opera Excerpt Frequency in Obtained Audition Lists

KEY:

X= yes, contains excerpt.

O = only list (no packet) obtained, Unable to confirm exact excerpt mm#, and educated guess was made.

T= only list obtained (no packet), obtained, no specific mm# included on list, not able to make an educated guess.

* = Comments (see beneath chart).

Berg: Wozzeck	The MET 1997 (Principal)	Vancouver Opera 2006 (Section Bsn)	Opera Australia 2007 (Assoc. Principal)	The MET 2009 (Bsn 2/Contra)	LA Opera 2011 (Principal)	WNO/KCOHO 2011 (Bassoon/Contra)	Houston Grand Opera 2012 (Principal)	The MET 2012 (Principal)	San Francisco Opera 2012 (Bsn 2)	San Francisco Opera 2014 (Bsn 3/Contra)	WNO/KCOHO 2015 (Principal)	Santa Fe Opera 2016 (Principal)	Ash Lawn Opera Festival 2017 (Principal)	Michigan Opera Theatre 2017 (Principal)	Opera Philadelphia 2017 (Bsn 2)	The MET 2018 (Principal)	Atlanta Opera 2018 (Principal)	Lyric Opera of Chicago Winter 2018 (Principal)	Boston Lyric Opera n.d. (Substitute)	Opera Australia n.d. (Freelance)	Gothenburg Opera n.d. (Fagott)
	Act I: bars 91-93											X									X
	Act I Excerpt: bars 153-160											X						X			X
	Act I, Sc. 3: bars 441-443																				X
	Act I: bars 445-447																				X
	Act I: bars 523-524																				X
	Act II: bars 170-174																				X
	Act II, Sc. 4: bars 288-292	X							X			X				X					X
	Act I: 3 bars after reh 100 to 2 bars before reh 120 (cbsn)				X					X											
	Act II: 1 bar after reh 140 to 2 bars before reh 165 (cbsn)				X					X											
Bizet: Carmen	Entr'acte: beginning to reh 2 (28 bars) (bsn)	X		X	X		X	X	X	O			O	X	O	X	X		O	X	
	Entr'acte: reh 2 to fermata after reh 3 (bsn)								X	O					O						
	Act II, No. 18: 6 bars after reh 51 to reh 52 (bsn)								X												
	Act IV, No. 26: 12 bars before reh 12 to 4 bars after reh 12 (bsn)								X		X	X			O						
	Act IV, No. 26: reh 21 for 16 bars (bsn)								X		X	X			O						
Britten: Peter Grimes	Prologue: bars 1-5	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				O	X		X			
	Act II, Interlude 2: reh 51-54																	X			X

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